00088358

THE

ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY

Town Hall, Bombay.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 03 December, 2015

CAMP of HASSAN, A BEDOUIN CHIEF.

LETTERS

FROM THE EAST.

88358
B. 12 23.

BY

JOHN CARNE, Esq.

OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1826.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY, DORSET STREET.

CAMP G. HASSAN, A BF[illegible]

TO

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

THIS VOLUME

IS, BY HIS PERMISSION,

INSCRIBED,

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF THE HIGHEST RESPECT,

BY THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

A portion of the following work has already appeared in the New Monthly Magazine. The Letters from Greece are now first printed.

CONTENTS.

LETTER I.

Voyage from Marseilles to Pera.—Island of Zea.—Grecian coast.—Pass the Dardanelles.—Turkish villages.—View of Constantinople.—Anchor at Buyukderé.—The Seraglio.—Land at Galata.—Massacre of the Greeks.—Beautiful village of Therapia.—Execution of two Greeks of rank.—Purchase-money of a beautiful slave.—Fine presence of the Turkish race.—Their indolence.—Character of the Turks.—Thei ruling passion.—Feast of Beiram.—Game of the jerrid.—Cemetery.—Boats of the Bosphorus.—Visit to the Islands of Chalcé and Prinkipo.—Picturesque scenery.—Tour of the walls of Constantinople.—Anecdote of Mahmoud II.—Sacred fish.—The Atmeidan or great square.—Exterior of the mosque of Saint Sophia.—Gate of the Seraglio.—The Bezestein bazaar.—What merchants and pilgrims are seen in the bazaars.—The Author and his friends arrested by Turkish soldiers near Therapia.—Romantic appearance of their camp.—Hospitable reception in the Pacha's tent.—Curious account of the whirling dervishes.—Procession of the reigning Sultan described.

Page 1—25

LETTER II.

The howling dervishes at Scutari.—Wandering dervishes and Santons.—Conclusion of the fast of Ramadan, when the Beiram commences.—Illuminated minarets.—Children extremely beautiful.—Population of Constantinople and the suburbs.—Devotion of the Turks.—Their life and habits unvarying.—Table and domestic economy.—The Greek quarter of the Fanal deserted.—Affecting events at Parga.—Massacre at Smyrna.—Aqueducts of Justinian and Bourgas.—Forest of Belgrade.—Delightful scenery of the shores of the Bosphorus.—Condition of Turkish women.—Effects of opium, and of a blind indulgence in it.—Tobacco and coffee of excellent quality.—Palace of the British Embassador.—English ladies of distinction.—Honourable conduct of the common Turks in the Capital.—Amusing anecdote.—Number and character of the Janizaries.—Death of Sultan Selim III.

Page 26—45

LETTER III.

The Author sails from Constantinople.—The site of Abydos.—A young traveller perishes of a fever, brought on by the exertion of swimming across to Sestos.—Englishmen who established a cotton manufactory at Tebriz.—The Author's servant Michele Milovich.—His zeal.—Appearance of the Isle of Scio.—Visit the Consul's house in that fine Island.—Character of the Sciotes.—General massacre in Scio.—Twenty thousand Sciotes perished.—Supposed school of Homer.—Convent of Nehahmonce.—Productions of Scio.—Fine climate.—Quit the Island.—Arrival at Smyrna.—Intermarriages of Europeans with the Smyrniotes.—Oriental burying-ground.—Villas of European merchants at Bournabat.—Storks; pigeons flying round the remains of Balbec.—Table d'hôte.—

Crew of a Ragusan ship put to death.—The *beau idéal* exemplified in a Greek face.—Curiosity and versatility of the Greeks.—Calm conduct on the approach of a violent death.—Heart-rending anecdote of a Grecian wife.—Passage to Alexandria.—Boarded by the Greek squadron.—Fellow-passengers described.—View of Alexandria.—Pompey's pillar seen above the city. Page 46—66.

LETTER IV.

The Author lands in Egypt.—Insects and flies.—Song of a Turk.—Hire donkeys for an excursion.—Pompey's pillar of the Corinthian order.—Height of Cleopatra's Needle; its hieroglyphics.—Ruins of the ancient Alexandria.—Resort of the Frank coffee-houses.—Fortifications of the city.—Mahmoud Aly, the Viceroy or Pacha, massacres the Beys of the Mamelukes.—Canal of Cleopatra completed.—Personal appearance of the Viceroy of Egypt.—Wages paid for the forced labour of Egyptians and Arabs.—Description of Rosetta.—Nuptials of the Consul's daughter at Damietta.—Eastern etiquette.—The Author navigates the river Nile.—Villages and Minarets on its shores.—The town of Foua.—The Muezzin's call to prayers.—Still waters of the Nile.—Excellence of the provisions served on board.—Passengers in the bark described.—The aged Reis commanding the vessel falls overboard, and is drowned in the Nile. Page 67—79.

An Arab village of unburnt brick; dinner obtained in it.—Names of the Arabs imprinted on their wrist.—Their cookery.—Enter Boulac, the port of Grand Cairo.—Sorrow of the ill-fated Reis's family.—Strong emotions of the Arabs.—Visit to Mr. Salt, the Consul-general.—Ancient look of Grand Cairo. Mounds of rubbish around it.—Population.—Architecture and economy of this capital.—Style of living of the European inhabitants.—Fruits and luxuries.—Clouted

cream vended as a substitute for butter.—Cutting of the bank of the Nile, August 16th.—Concourse and festival on this occasion witnessed by the Author.—Gushing of the waters through the opening in the dykes.—Largesse thrown into the torrent by the Kiaya Bey causes the drowning of some of the scramblers.—Blessing of this annual flood.—Cairo gradually flooded by this great national and agricultural operation. Page 68—90.

LETTER V.

Burial-ground of the Mamelukes.—The tombs of the Caliphs.—Mystery of an Egyptian wedding.—Ancient wall of Cairo.—Mount Mokatam, and the Citadel.—Narrow pass, skirted by rocks, in which the three hundred Beys were slain when on a visit to the Citadel.—Conduct of Ibrahim Pacha.—Asses hired by the hour.—The descent to Joseph's Well.—Hall and Granaries of Joseph.—The Author accompanies M. Caviglia to the Pyramids.—Gizeh. The allaying of thirst a primary object.—Causeways across the inundated country.—Distant view of the Pyramids.—Sups in a cavern.—M. Caviglia's excavations.—Subterraneous communication sought for.—The enormous Sphynx.—The Author ascends the great Pyramid.—Beholds the desert and the course of the Nile.—Height of the Pyramids; first impression on the mind on seeing them.—Descends into the great Pyramid.—Celebrated Sarcophagus.—Belzoni's chamber in the rock.—An Arabian Santon residing at the Pyramids.—The sacred trees.—Sunset beheld in the Desert.—Bedouins.—Reflections on the Author's intended route and its perils.—The Pyramids of Saccara in sight.—Bathing.—The inundation extended.—Agriculture.—An Arab funeral.—Market at Cairo for the sale of Circassian women.—High value.—Family of a rich Jew visited by the Author. Page 91—113

LETTER VI.

Departure from Grand Cairo for Upper Egypt.—Sail in a *cangia* on the Nile.—Town of Benesuef.—Pure atmosphere in an Oriental country.—Civilities of a Turkish officer.—Town of Miniet; sugar manufactory of Mr. Brine.—His English garden.—Indolence of the Africans.—Death of Mr. Brine.—Monfalut.—Almek dancing-girls.—Siout the provincial capital.—Girgé. A Greek doctor of Ibrahim's army at Sennaar.—The second Beiram.—A Coptic convent.—Precipitous shore of the Nile.—The sceptical barber.—Visit to the temple of Tentyra.—Hieroglyphics.—The *Zodiac* removed from Tentyra to Paris.—Mode of propitiating the waters when the overflowing is scanty. Page 113—124

Kenéh, a commercial town of Upper Egypt.—Supposed site of Coptos.—Ancient columns removed to support a village mosque.—Devoutness of the people.—Funeral at Koft.—Scenery; range of Libyan and Arabian mountains on either side of the Nile.—Luxor: ruins of the great Temple.—Twelve enormous granite figures fixed by the water's edge.—Obelisks, with a fine specimen of hieroglyphics.—French residents at Luxor.—Suleiman Aga, commandant at Esneh.—Stupendous ruins of Thebes.—Dimensions of the Temple of Karnac.—The avenue of Sphynxes.—Magnificent portico.—The Thebais.—Obelisk broken down by Drouetti.—Superstition of the Arabs respecting these ruins.—Night-scene of great interest. Page 125—135.

LETTER VII.

The Author visits the Memnonium.—The hieroglyphics warlike.—Columnar statues of Osiris.—Great statue at Kurnu.—Ruins of Medinet Abou.—Elegant palace.—The Temple.—Cemetery of Thebes.—Devastations as to the ancient mummies.—The colossi of Memnon,

seated amidst the inundation.—Heat nearly insufferable.—Gradual change of complexion, until black is found the general colour.—Temple of Etfu or Apollinopolis.—Greek adventurer.—Early marriages.—Essonan and the site of Syené.—Island of Elephantine. Observation regarding Palestine.—Visit to the Isle of Philœ.—Its lonely situation in the Nile near to the desert.—Importunities of a Berebere. Delay in Elephantine.—The Cataracts insignificant.—Return to Thebes.—Deserted monastery.—Tombs of the Kings; curious chiselled and painted allegories on the walls of the fourteen chambers.—Renegades in Ibrahim Pacha's army.—The Arabian Nights' Entertainments inspected by two Arabs.—Fakir, or Arab priest, described.—The dying girl.—What feelings of pity are excited by such impressive scenes. Page 136—154.

LETTER VIII.

Arrival at Aboutigé.—Author's ride to Monfalut.—An Arab fair.—Hamlet of Copts within an inclosure of walls.—Books in the Coptic character.—Enters the city of Siout.—Caravan of black slaves for the market of Cairo.—Game at quarter-staff.—Radamouni.—Ruins of Hermopolis.—Antinoé built by Hadrian.—Lands near Saccara.—View from the top of these pyramids.—Renovated verdure on the fall of the inundation.—Climate too sultry for continued land-journeys.—Resides in the house of M. Asselin at Cairo.—French Mamelukes seen in this city, who formerly preserved the Pacha's life.—Tomb of Burckhardt.—Tales of wonder told in the coffee-houses of Cairo.—Travelling narrators of stories.—Daughter of the Swedish Consul shot by a fanatic soldier.—Passage of caravans through Cairo towards Mecca, highly interesting.—Books scarce.—Singular exhibition of drollery.—The Pacha's palace at Shonbra.—A Frank physician is readily admitted into a Harem.—Pleasant

site of Old Cairo.—Hadgis, or pilgrims.—Ordeal experienced at the warm-baths of Cairo.—European party which accompanies the Author to visit Mount Sinai. Page 155—171

LETTER IX.

Sensations felt in travelling on a camel.—Life of the wandering Arabs not without a strong charm and interest.—A German missionary from Cambridge carrying bibles to Mount Sinai, in terror of a night attack.—Arrival at Suez.—Shore of the Red Sea.—The fish delicious.—Pools called the fountains of Moses.—Varied scenery of the desert in plain and mountain.—Valley of Paran and its fountain.—Singing of a German servant displeasing to the Arabs.—Dews at night.—Group of Arabs; their songs.—Salutation by passengers in the desert.—Tea, a luxury desirable in these deserts.—Wild glen.—Costume of the Arabs.—Grandeur of scenery around the convent of Sinai.—Winding valley in the approach to Mount Sinai.—This mount not conspicuous above the neighbouring mountains.—They reach the convent of Saint Catherine.—Welcomed by Jouma, their Arab guide.—Travellers hauled up by the monks with ropes cast from the window.—Reflections on the comparative nature of human happiness.—Matins of the Greek monks.—Their table, health and innocence.—Fine church and tomb of St. Catherine, which merely contains a waxen image.—Rich altar.—Curious manuscript delivered up to the Sultan.—The Monks fear assassination by the Arabs.—Bread and cakes cast out to propitiate them.—Buonaparte's present of two pieces of cannon for the convent's defence. Page 156—191

LETTER X.

Tradition as to Moses.—Aged Monk.—The four summits of Mount Sinai.—Enthusiasm of the missionary

on ascending the Mount.—Monastery from which the Arabs expelled the inmates.—Night spent in its deserted chambers.—They ascend St. Catherine's, surmised to be Mount Horeb.—Rock of Meribah; local evidence of the miracle.—The Author and party captured by Bedouins on their return to the convent, in which they had left their arms.—Anxious night passed near the fire of the sleeping captors.—The three travellers carried off to the wilderness of Paran.—Mount Paran described.—The chief, Hassan, conducts them through the narrow defiles of Paran.—Hospitable entertainment by Hassan's friends.—Black goat.—Volleys fired upon the Monks in their secure convent.—Remarkable p. ints.—Secluded life of the Monks.

Page 192—209.

LETTER XI.

The party reach Hassan's encampment.—Jealousy which the tribe entertained of the Monks of St. Catherine.—Imaginary Book of Might.—The two wives of Hassan.—Manners of the Bedouins.—Their friendship for each other.—The captives are visited by the younger wife of the chief.—The Missionary fearful of her visits.—Ibrahim, an Arab chief, intercedes for the prisoners with Saleh, the chief of the whole territory.—Council of thirty Sheiks assembles.—Hassan overpersuaded to set them free.—Saleh's curious dispatch to Cairo.—Hassan conveys the liberated party to Cairo.—Hassan run away with by a camel.—Scene of the miraculous passage of the Red Sea.—Valley of Hirondel.—Locusts described.—Rejoined by Michel, and Franco, the German servant.—Meet with pilgrims returning from Mecca.—They ford the Red Sea to Suez.—The plan which had been formed for their rescue.—Kind reception by the Aga at Suez.—Lights of a caravan at night.—In ten days reach Cairo.—Hassan preserved from vengeance; amicable parting.

—Sail in a *cangia* for Alexandria.—Hospitality of Mr. Lee, the Consul at Alexandria. The Author departs for Palestine. Page 210—227

LETTER XII.

The Author sails from Alexandria.—Voyage of a Rabbi to Palestine when on the point of death.—Indifference of a Turk to the inconveniences of the voyage.—Mount Carmel in sight.—Lands at Caifa.—Catholic priest expelled from the ruined convent.—Procures a passport for Acre.—Meets the Missionary at Acre, who proceeds with the Author to Tyre.—Lodges in a lonely khan.—Population of Tyre.—Proceeds to Sidon.—Murilius, the house of Lady H. Stanhope.—Her domestic economy.—Her spirit changed since she quitted Palmyra.—Her influence.—Her former adventurous journey when she became Queen of Palmyra.—She shuns English society.—French artist shot by Arabs.—Arrival at Beirout, a pleasant town of Syria.—War betwixt the Pachas of Acre and Damascus.—Mr. A. the English Consul.—Granite pillars seen along the margin of the sea.—Faccardine, a Prince of the Druses.—The rainy season.—Visit paid to the Emir Busheer; personal description of this ruler of Mount Lebanon.—Prophecy which is credited respecting the conversion of Christians to the faith of Mahomet.—Feasting at Beirout.—The Author repairs to the town of Dalil Camar.—Race of the Druses.—Convents of Lebanon.—Returns to Tyre.—Passes a night in a village near Acre, in the Sheik's house. Page 228—248.

LETTER XIII.

The Author ascends Mount Carmel.—The River Kishon, and plain of Esdraelon.—Mounts Tabor and Hermon seen in front.—Fertility of Palestine.—In-

vitation given him by Arab Gipsies.—Population of Nazareth is Christian.—Church and convent of Spanish priests.—The workshop of Joseph.—School which was attended by the Saviour.—Table of rock.—Precipice; Tradition regarding it.—Romantic seclusion of this town.—Flat top of Mount Tabor.—Cana, and its vessels for water.—Fish of the Lake of Tiberias.—Site of Cæsarea.—Arrival at Jaffa.—Anecdote of the Consul, Signor Damiani.—Residence of Simon Peter the tanner.—Convent at Ramha.—First prospect obtained of Jerusalem.—Oriental luxuries exchanged for a cell in the Convent.—The Author perambulates the environs.—Rocky valley of Hinnom.—Mount of Olives.—Valley of Jehoshaphat.—The Armenian quarter.—The Convent receives great presents from Pilgrims.—The Jewish quarter of the city.—Population of the Holy City.—Mount Olivet higher than Zion.—The Modern Tower of David.—Situation of Mount Calvary.—Beautiful Mosque of Omar.—Site of Solomon's Temple.—Christians not permitted to approach it.—The Mosque of David.—Father Giuseppe and the Franciscan Monks.—Visit to the Holy Sepulchre.—The sacred tomb.—Paintings of the Ascension, and Appearance to Mary in the garden.—Demeanour of the Pilgrims. Page 249—268

LETTER XIV.

The ascent to Mount Calvary.—The summit is crowned by the sacred Church.—Spot on which stood the Cross.—Night spent in the Church.—Solemn music.—Impressiveness of the place after midnight.—Computation of the number of Pilgrims.—Audience of the Armenian Patriarch.—Procession of the three orders of Monks round the tomb.—Altercation near the Holy Sepulchre.—Father Paolo Tiliungi.—The Author proceeds to Bethlehem.—Monastery of St. Elias.—

Site of the stable in which the Redeemer was born.—The study of St. Jerome.—Shells of mother of pearl.—Reservoirs formed by Solomon.—Hebron; cave in which Abraham and Isaac were interred.—Tedium evinced by the Monks at Jerusalem.—Visit to the Dead Sea not permitted.—The pool of Bethesda.—Judgement-hall of Pilate.—Historical considerations respecting the real site of certain ancient spots.—Revolting ceremony.—The Fountain of Siloé.—Magnificent cavern.—Anecdotes. Page 269—286

LETTER XV.

View of the Dead Sea from Jerusalem.—The brook Kedron.—Circuit of the City.—Topography of the ancient and modern town.—The garden of Gethsemane.—Church built by the Empress Helena.—Pillar of Absalom.—Village of Siloa.—Mount of Judgement.—Tombs of the Kings.—General appearance of Jerusalem.—Nature of the neighbouring hills.—The Wilderness.—Danger of a charcoal fire.—Franciscan Convent.—Valley of Elah.—Scenes of the ancient engagements.—The Governor of the City visited by the Author.—Visit to Bethphage and Bethany.—Tomb of Lazarus.—The River Jordan.—Condition of the Jews. Page 287—306

LETTER XVI.

Hill and Cave of Engedi.—The Wilderness of Ziph traversed without a guard.—The Author visits the Cave of Engedi, inhabited by Ibrahim, an Arab.—Convent of St. Saba.—Character and conversation of Michel.—Cakes kept at the Convent to appease the Arabs.—Occupation of a venerable Greek.—Foxes; a large bird shot.—A human body covered with bitumen.—The Author proceeds by night towards the Dead Sea.—Passes an Arab encampment.—Suc-

ceeds in reaching the Dead Sea.—Its wild and gloomy aspect.—Mountains of Judæa and Arabia Petræa.—Length and breadth of the Lake.—Awful precipices around the Dead Sea.—Distant view of Jericho.—Desert.—Arrival at Jericho.—Fountain.—Quarantina Mountain.—Description of the Jordan.—Return to Jerusalem.—Ibrahim rewarded. ... Page 307—326

LETTER XVII.

Privileges of the Catholic and Greek Monks.—Procession to the tomb of Lazarus.—Pilgrims.—Hill of Michmash.—Sepulchres of the Jews.—Reflections on the modern Jews.—A zealous Monk, and a solitary Greek.—Scene of the death of Hezekiah.—Situation of the Mosques.—Village of Lazarea.—Second visit to the Monks of St. Saba.—The Monastery described.—Ibrahim, and the Cave of Engedi.—Caves in the Wilderness of Ziph, and bones there discovered.—The Greek Monks.—Money paid for the purchase of images, and for entertainment.—Solitude of the Monks.—Party of Armenians.—Feast of Easter.—Ceremony of the Holy Light.—The Synagogue.—Jewish ceremony. ... Page 327—352

LETTER XVIII.

The war prevents an immediate visit to Damascus.—Effects of the war remarked upon at Acre.—A trench dug to strengthen the Fortifications.—Cruelty of Djezzar.—History of the Jewish Minister, put to death by Selim Pacha.—Khan at Ebilené.—Field where the Disciples plucked the ears of corn.—Mount of Beatitudes.—Town of Tiberias.—Jews, who retire in advanced years to die in Palestine.—Lake of Tiberias.—Passage of the Jordan through the Lake.—Mountain of Bethulia.—Castle and Rock of Safet.

—Friendly reception by a Shiek, when benighted.—Pipe of the Syrian shepherds.—Town of Hasbeia.—Action; village of Rasheia destroyed.—Hill of Gibl Sheich covered with snow.—Damascus seen peering over an extensive wood. Page 353—373

LETTER XIX.

The Author visits the Spanish Convent.—Resides in Damascus.—Its extent.—Manners and costume of the Inhabitants.—Luxury.—Exquisite fruit and conserves.—Mourning in the Cemeteries.—The Great Bazaar.—Christian travellers not allowed to enter the Mosque.—Want of wines.—Rich commodities.—Kiosque.—Plain of Damascus.—The River Barrady.—Architecture and pavement.—Chaboiceau, a physician.—Amount of Christian population.—Amusing anecdote of a barber.—The Coffee-houses described.—Catholic Convent.—Pacha of Damascus.—Mountain of Ashloon, and road to Palmyra.—Attractions of an Eastern climate, and influence of its manners.—Costume of the Arabs.—Departure for Balbec. Page 374—392

LETTER XX.

Village of Zibolané.—Demetrius, a Greek servant.—Ruins of Balbec.—Dimensions of the Temple.—Corinthian Capitals.—Sculptures.—Circular marble edifice.—The ancient quarry.—Sunrise, splendid amidst the ruins.—Lalla Rookh contains a faithful description.—Ascent of Lebanon.—The Author revisits Beirout.—Plunder during the warfare.—Silver horn worn by the women of Lebanon.—Young Swiss Missionary, his unlucky adventures.—Remarks upon the missions to the East.—Bishop Eusebius.—Travelling enthusiasm of a Roman Count.—Missionary's endeavour to convert the Prince of the Druses.—Snow on Mount Lebanon.—Beauty of Mount Carmel. Page 393—411

LETTER XXI.

Healthiness of Syria.—Longevity.—Emir Busheer, Prince of the Druses, and his troops.—His admiration of Sir Sydney Smyth, and of Lady H. Stanhope.—Character of this "Queen of the East."—The Dragoman in love with her Ladyship's companion.—Unguarded behaviour of an English traveller.—Conversation of Lady Stanhope.—Her encounter with the Arab Sheik.—Fête given by her at Palmyra.—Tax upon travellers who visit the ruins.—Arab soothsayer.—Villa of Marilius.—Its stud.—Generosity and hospitality of the illustrious Lady.—Her eccentricity.—Two English Ladies visit her.—Christians forbidden to approach Mecca.—Village of Antoura, in which Mr. Wortley Montague resided. Page 412—435

LETTER XXII.

The Author's distressing voyage in an open boat.—Arrives off Cyprus.—Port of Larnica.—The European Consuls.—Excesses committed in Cyprus.—The Consul prepares to defend his house.—A Greek constrained to embrace Islamism.—Tragical situation of a Greek family.—Visit to the interior of the Island.—Cytherean groves, and village of Cytherea.—Monastery of St. Chrysostom.—Castle in ruin.—The Author received at Nicosia by Archbishop Cyprian.—Affecting anecdote of this Prelate.—Mosque of Nicosia; the Imaun expounding the Koran.—The Governor's palace.—Cruel execution of the principal Greek inhabitants.—Boast of a Sclavonian soldier.—Women of Cyprus.—Audience of the Governor.—His violence in discourse.—Visit paid to a General of the Egyptians.—Image of the Virgin in the Greek Convent.—The Author's farewell to the ill-fated Cyprian.—Massacre of the Archbishop and his chief Clergy.

Page 436—463

LETTER XXIII.

The Author proceeds to the ancient Idalium.—Isolated family of Lepers.—Return to Larnica.—The Consul and his Family.—Demetrie's hoard of reliques.—The Author parts from his travelling acquaintance.—Sails from Cyprus.—Companions on ship-board.—Demetrio, a devout Sclavonian.—Long and boisterous voyage.—Want of sea-store.—Monks fearful during the storm.—A calm.—Despair of the passengers.—Delight experienced on landing in the Island of Rhodes.—Catholic Convent.—Fortifications of the city.—The town and harbour.—Superb climate.—*Chargés-d'affaires.*—English Captain, who embarks Turkish troops.—Sentiments of a Spanish Monk.—Villas.—Scenery of Rhodes.—The rose and myrtle.—Population and extent.—Cheap living. Page 464—485

LETTER XXIV.

Mountain in the Island of Rhodes.—The Author's perambulation.—Deceitful moment of tranquillity.—He sets sail.—Embayed, amidst islets and rocks.—Lands at Navarino.—Island and Castle of Sphacteria.—French Officers defeat an attempt of the Turks from Modon to surprise the Fortress of Navarino.—Wines of the Morea.—Turkish garrison put to the sword.—Description of Neo Castro, and of Sphacteria.—The Author proceeds into the Interior.—Unfortunate Sciote refugees.—Their miserable plight.—Popularity of the French merchants.—Village magistrate, want of repose after fatigue.—Depopulated Turkish village.—Messenian valley described.—Monastery and villages.—Site of Messené, ... Page 486—507

LETTER XXV.

Mount Ithomé.—Peril and wanderings.—The Author takes shelter in a lone cottage.—Eagerness of the

country people to plunder the Turks.—Mainotes.—The Eurotas.—Mountain prospect.—Cruel acts.—Invitation from some Mainotes refused.—Gates of Tripolizza.—Party at night.—Lodging procured in the house of a soldier.—The Author removes to the house of Kyr Nicolai.—Description of Tripolizza.—Palace of a slaughtered Turk.—Turkish orphans.—Extraordinary capture of Tripolizza.—Greek Senate.—Approach of Raschid Pacha.—Costume of the Greek soldiers.—The Mosques and Minarets.—Military Priests.—The Koran burned.—French surgeon.—Resemblance of the Mainotes to the Scotch Islanders.—The Italian artillerist, his character.—Lively detail of a Coffee-house.—Beautiful women from the Greek Islands. Page 508—529

LETTER XXVI.

Distressing scenes at Tripolizza.—Unfortunate Aga.—European volunteers.—Death of an enthusiastic Englishman.—History of a Turkish widow.—Excesses in Tripolizza.—The Author's visit to the plain of Mantinea.—Site of Mantinea.—Climate.—English gentleman's adventures.—Greek merchants.—Colocotroni.—Courschid Pacha's ladies ransomed. Page 530—552

LETTER XXVII.

Advance of Courschid Pacha, to Argos.—Alarm of the Government.—Turkish etiquette overthrown.—Situation of the Turks.—Supineness of the Turkish army.—Resolve of Bobolina, a Greek lady, to slay her sister.—Timely firmness of Colocotroni.—The Aga Ali Cochi.—Visit to the Palace of a Turkish Commander.—The Author quits Tripolizza.—Argos burnt.—Hamlet in the mountains.—Flight of the Turkish widow.—Author's route to the Coast described.—He sails for Zante.—Wretched condition

of travellers in the Lazaretto.—Release from Quarantine.—Parting with the faithful Michel.—The Author's arrival in England. Page 552—578

APPENDIX.

Visit to Palmyra, communicated by a Friend of the Author.—The traveller quits Damascus.—The Desert described.—Achmed, his Arab guide.—Mountain of Ashloon.—Arabs and their flocks.—Their costume.—Reception at Carieteen.—Halt in the Desert.—Coolness of the nights.—Arrival at Palmyra.—The great Scheik.—The celebrated ruins explored.—Their resemblance to those of Thebes.—Estimated circumference of the ancient edifices.—Height and diameter of the columns.—Historical disquisition respecting the era when this city was built.—Tadmor.—King Rezon.—Sepulchral monuments.—Mummies.—The Castle Hill.—Valley of Salt.—Sulphureous springs.—Supper of goats'-flesh.—Brandy not forbidden by the Prophet.—Account of the Bedouin tribe, and the Scheik of Palmyra.—Beauty of the Palmyrene women.—The great Lady.—Farewell view of the Temple of the Sun.—Return to Damascus. Page 579—593

In the press,

BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

LETTERS,

WRITTEN DURING A TOUR THROUGH

SWITZERLAND AND ITALY,

IN THE YEAR 1825.

LETTERS

FROM

THE EAST.

LETTER I.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

We arrived at Pera near Constantinople, after a very good passage of eighteen days from Marseilles, without much incident. The worst part of it was a calm of four days, that came on as we lost sight of Sardinia: during which the utter want of interest and variety brought a most wearying vacuity upon the mind, as we sat upon the deck, sick, gazing only on the sea and sky, and the waste of waters heaving around. On the fifth day a beautiful breeze sprang up, and sickness and weariness fled away. The Morea came in sight, and we

saw a sunset equal to some I have seen in England. But one lovely evening, the island of Zea was on one side, and a very pretty Greek town of white houses with flat roofs on its declivity, and a church at the bottom, with its town, just like one of our country village churches: the high and romantic land of Greece, very barren, was on the other side; over which the sun sank gradually with indescribable splendour. But the twilight here is much shorter than with us; nor do the hues of sunset, though more delicate and soft, linger so long in the sky. The range of Grecian country, terminating in the capes Colonna and Negropont, was extremely lofty, and the hills finely wooded; and far in the back-ground were mountains covered with snow. The islands of Mitylene, Ipsara, and at last Tenedos, came in sight, with the land of Troy. But the land of the East, to which we were fast approaching, now became the great object of interest; and the entrance of the Dardanelles at last opened; a vessel or two preceding us, when a gun from the fort told us that all was not peace. We were ordered, from a Turkish frigate, into a position near the shore. The captain concealed his money. Two boats boarded us on both sides with soldiers and

several officers; but they only came to know if we had any design to assist the Greeks with stores or ammunition, and they at last gave us permission to depart.

After some hours' stay we proceeded up the Dardanelles, Europe on one side and Asia on the other; and soon Turkey opened on us with its loveliest scenery. I do not know if I can convey a proper idea of it,—it is so different from that of Europe. What gives a peculiar beauty to the Turkish towns and villages, is their being so embosomed in trees. You always see these of the liveliest verdure, hanging over and shading the greatest part of the houses. The habitations are rather low, and built generally of wood, with gently sloping roofs; they are either of a red, white, or lead colour, with windows of framework of wood. The neat white minaret of the mosque rises eminent amidst every village. The country was rich in many parts with corn, which had been already cut; and a cool kiosque was seen, shaded with its luxuriance of wood. But all this only whetted my impatience to behold Stamboul, as the Turks call it; and night came down again to augment it. For the last few days the sky had become more beautiful, of a most delicate blue, bounded near the horizon by

a ridge of white clouds; and the last day of our voyage was particularly fine, when a gentle breeze brought us towards the capital of the East. The first view rather disappoints you; the surrounding shores are not striking, and you are inclined to ask, where is the magnificence of Constantinople? But when you enter the canal, and turn the point where stands the seraglio, and the site of the city, being built on declivities, rises higher, so that houses appear to range on houses—and Pera and Galata, with the immense dark grove of cypress on the place of graves that crowns the hill, open to your view—you are struck with admiration. The houses of wood, of which the city is chiefly built, have indeed nothing grand in their appearance; three-fourths of the fronts are taken up with windows. But it is the novel and beautiful blending of trees and verdure with every part; the innumerable minarets, some with gilded tops that glitter in the sun; and the superior mosques, of a nobler appearance, and towering above all other buildings, —which impress the mind of a stranger with feelings unknown at the sight of any other European city.

Our vessel being bound for Odessa, proceeded up the river to the village of Buyuk-

deré, a few miles distant, celebrated for its beauty. This afforded an excellent opportunity to view the scenery; and few who have once done this can ever forget it. Each side of the river—a noble stream, of a mile, or sometimes half that in width—was thickly covered with habitations. In one part was a mosque of the purest white marble, most richly ornamented and gilded, and the dark cypress around it. On the left, a summer seraglio of the Sultan, with its small pleasure-ground, stretched along the shore. The hills on the European side, descending nearly close to the river, and prettily wooded, yet so small that they looked in miniature; and the little Turkish houses, standing in the river, or hanging in parapets over it, or thrown back in a retiring wood,—put you in mind of what you had imagined of Chinese scenery and dwellings. My view often wandered with delight over the Asiatic side, as the scene of future pleasures. "At last," I said to myself, "my long-cherished hopes are accomplished; it is all oriental that I see; but my expectations are surpassed."

After casting anchor at Buyukderé, the captain procured a boat to carry us back to Constantinople. One Turkish rower only had to pull against a strong wind for some miles; it was

most laborious work for him, though well paid: it was the fast of Ramadan; and the poor fellow pointed to his stomach very expressively, to signify he had eaten nothing all day. It was evening as we entered the basin of Constantinople; and it was like a scene of enchantment. The seraglio, in part a range of white buildings, beautifully figured in front, with hanging roofs of a lead colour, but without any magnificence of architecture, stood close to the water's edge; behind was a rich and moveless mass of cypress, varied by the vast domains of the palace, which occasionally glittered through or rose over it. On the left was Scutari, one of the suburbs on the Asiatic side, with its white mosques: and as we drew nearer the landing-place, large boats, with Turks of all ranks and dresses, passed rapidly by.

We were not aware of the tumults and massacres of which Constantinople had been the scene. It was not safe for an European to pass through Pera and Galata without a janizary. On landing at the latter suburb, we entered a coffee-house: but the Turks, with impressive gestures, warned us away. Not only the soldiers, but all the populace, bore arms: the very boys had their pistols and ataghan, and had learned to dip their hands in blood. Al-

most every day some dreadful atrocity was acted. There was no mercy for the Greek, wherever discovered; no home could shelter him, save the palaces of the ambassadors. The windows of the lofty apartment where we lodged, looked down on a cemetery, with its cypress-grove. As soon as evening set in, the firing of musquets and pistols commenced around it, and was kept up at intervals through the night: this rendered it very unsafe to walk there after sunset. Of the Greek boyars, or noblemen, scarcely one now remains. Those who were not slain in the tumults have fled from their homes, and left their families and possessions at the mercy of the Turks. The village of Therapia on the Bosphorus was celebrated alike for the beauty of its women and the uncommon loveliness of its situation. It was a luxury to a stranger in the cool of evening to see the Greek ladies and princesses walking there, with their raven hair scarcely confined, and the rich veil turned aside; their classic features and fine forms harmonizing well with the exquisite scenery around. But now every path is silent there, and their palaces are deserted.

As I sat one afternoon beneath the portico of the Palace of the Janizaries in Constan-

tinople, two Greeks, of a superior class, were brought in under a guard. It was impossible not to be moved at such a scene. They were both elderly men; and as they walked with a firm step, their looks were placid and resigned. Their fate was inevitable; their retreat had been discovered, and they were torn from their families to die. Indeed it was singular to observe the resignation, approaching to apathy, with which the Greeks in general met their fate. One unfortunate man had made his escape; but so strong was his desire after a few weeks to see his family again, that he ventured back. The very evening of his return he was discovered in Galata, and dragged forth. The Greek knelt down, folded his arms on his breast tranquilly, without any change of feature, and was instantly shot. I passed by the body of this man twice afterwards: the Turks, as was their frequent practice after beheading, had fixed the head between the knees in an upright position, so that its ghastly aspect was sure to meet the eye of the passenger. The Musulmen certainly excel all other people in their dexterity in taking off the head at one blow. Afterwards, at Smyrna, I went early one morning to the execution of twenty-three Greeks, who were put to death in this way with

little pain. But the scene was closed before I arrived at the spot, where the bodies were then lying in a heap. It was truly shocking to see how cheap human life was held. The women were better off in this respect: but woe to those who had any beauty! they always found their way to the harems of the Turks, to become their slaves and mistresses; while the plain ones were cared nothing about. A young and very lovely Greek was offered for sale by an Armenian merchant at Constantinople for twenty thousand piastres, (about six hundred pounds). One of the pashas owed him that sum, and sent him this lady, who had become his captive, as payment, with directions that he must sell her for the full amount. The sex were, indeed, sadly degraded at this period. At the storming of Hivaly, a Greek town on the coast of Asia Minor, the Turks having put all the men to the sword, and secured the few beauties for their seraglios, sold the rest of the women for fifty piastres, or thirty shillings, a-piece. In *several of the warehouses* of the English merchants at Smyrna, the ladies were crowded together, of all kinds, ranks, ages, and charms, too happy to escape the hands of the true believers, never daring to quit their retreat, and supplied with food by the genero-

sity of their protectors.—But to return to Stamboul.'" How entire a change from the freedom and gaiety of France, which we had so lately left! The women you meet have a most repulsive appearance: a huge cloak hangs down to their feet, and a thick white veil covers the upper part of the face;—the pallid hue of the small part exposed, with the dark eyes peering earnestly over the veil, gives them just the appearance of corpses.

The various costumes of the Turks have much interest for a stranger. They are certainly, in personal appearance, the finest people in Europe, and their figures are much set off by their magnificent dress. During the feast of Beiram, when every man, from the prince to the peasant, puts on his best apparel, nothing could be more striking than the infinite variety and splendour of their dresses. The beauty of the Turks is peculiar; the features have a general bluntness, without "points or angles." The thick and heavy eyebrow covers a full, round, and dark eye; the nose straight, and the chin round, with a very handsome mouth. They walk extremely erect; and their large limbs, their slow pace, and flowing garments, give them a very majestic air. They will sit on benches spread with soft carpets, in the open

air, a great part of the day; and you see some of them reclining so moveless, with their head and noble white beard resting on their bosoms, and clothed in a light pink or white drapery, that they bring to mind the scene of the ancient Roman senators, when the Goths first rushed into the Forum and took their tranquil forms for statues. But nothing can exceed their indolence: they hold a string of beads in their hands of different colours, to play with like children, from mere inanity of thought, during the intervals of smoking.

From the extreme tranquillity and regularity of their lives, and their freedom from strong passions, derangement is a very rare circumstance with this people. We one day visited the house for lunatics, the only one in the city. It possessed a spacious court, with a fountain and trees in the middle; and the cells were ranged around. The persons confined were very few; and the madness of each was quiet and meditative, if such an expression is allowable. There was no violence or strong emotion of any kind manifested. One old man was happy to play his guitar and sing to any visitor.

Love can have little power on the mind with a people among whom the free association of

the sexes, or the knowledge of each other, is forbid by custom. For ambition, or the restless desire to rise in the world, whether to riches or fame, the Turk certainly cares less than any other being. The pride of family, or the trouble of sustaining it, affects him little, there being no orders of nobility amongst them. Give him his Arab horses, his splendid arms, his pipe and coffee, his seat in the shade,—and the Turk is in general contented with the state which Alla has assigned him. The pleasures of the table have few charms for him, for no other nation can equal his temperance at table. But his idol, his ruling passion, is beauty; for this he will pay any price. He will procure this from every nation: when the first wife of his fancy begins to lose the freshness of her charms, he will seek another more seductive; no matter whether Persian, Circassian, Greek, or Armenian. How admirably the prophet has adapted his paradise to the passions of his countrymen! The banks of roses on which the true believer sinks down, the palm, the orange, and the trees of perfume waving their eternal shadows over him, the fountains which gush away with a sound as of melody—all would be tame and unavailing, but for the

maids of immortal beauty, who await him there.

The feast of Beiram having commenced, we went to see the celebrated game of the jerrid, or hurling the blunt javelin; forming a party of six gentlemen, and attended by three janizaries. The coffee-houses in the suburbs of the city are often beautifully situated and shaded: near one of these were a number of little cars, very gaudily painted and canopied, with carpets in them; where the Turk reclined at his ease, and was drawn by the hand, by means of a long pole affixed. The weather was very hot; and our path was through the immense burial-ground on the summit of the hill, covered with its dark mass of noble cypress-trees. The tomb-stones were narrow, four or five feet high, with a turban of stone carved on the top of each, and adorned with various inscriptions, many of which, as well as the monument, were richly gilded.

You could not help contrasting this Eastern cemetery with that most interesting one at Paris, of Père La Chaise. There all was taste, elegance, and tenderness: the beds of flowers and garlands that adorned the neat mausoleums of white marble, on which the sun shone

—or the darker monuments which stood apart, shrouded by the cypress—all kept so clean and sacred, that a survivor might delight to retire there to mourn. Here there was a deep and impenetrable gloom, and a stillness well suited to it. You saw only here and there a female figure sitting on the earth, and mourning at the tomb of her husband or son: but her grief had no voice; and her face then partly unshrouded, with its pallid hue, looked as little enchanting as death itself.

On emerging from this vast cemetery, we descended the hill, and entered a small wood, where groups of Turks were seated in the shade, or beneath awnings, smoking and conversing, or amused with a buffoon. The field of action presented a scene truly interesting and oriental. It formed a kind of amphitheatre, the steep declivity of which was covered with innumerable spectators, who sat in rows on the ground, their turbaned heads, of all the colours of the rainbow; rising in ridges one over the other to the summit. Above these, on the brow of the hill, were pitched a number of tents; and beside them stood several open carriages, filled with Turkish ladies, yet veiled. The Sultan was in a kiosque that overlooked the field, before which were ranged his guards, uncommonly

fine men, all in white dresses. A number of beautiful Arabian coursers, richly caparisoned and held by grooms, stood around, and gave a variety to the scene. In a small valley below were the combatants with the jerrid. The wild Turkish music struck up, and the game was warmly engaged in. The dexterity of the players was admirable; starting at full speed in all directions, they threw the jerrid with infinite skill, and warded off their antagonist's, or caught it as it flew.

Though there are no carriages here, yet the Turkish boats, in which you are borne rapidly to any part of the shores of the Bosphorus, are an exceeding luxury. They are very light, and finely carved within, and often gilded. You are pestered, the moment you arrive at the water's edge, with innumerable applications. The boatmen are admirable rowers: so many of them have the privilege of being the prophet's cousins, that the green turban is quite common among them. We embarked one fine morning to visit the islands of Chalcé, Prinkipo, and others, seven miles from the city. The scenery they contain is really exquisite. There is a convent in each: a recluse could never wish for a lovelier retirement. A party of the natives were seated in the shade

of a large tree, smoking and sipping coffee. It would be worth while to know how far a Turk is sensible of the picturesque; he certainly has the range of the finest parts of the world. But it is quite amusing sometimes to see him seated beneath the portico of a coffee-house, that overlooks scenes which have no equal: with his little cup of coffee or sherbet, which he sips at intervals, musing between, or eating sweetmeats with childish fondness; while his deep external solemnity, his formidable weapons and lofty demeanour, afford a singular contrast.

On landing at Prinkipo, we were surrounded by a number of unfortunate Greeks, who were truly objects of sympathy and pity. They had not taken any part in the revolution; but, being not wholly free from suspicion, were sent here by the Turkish government to await their doom. What this would be they knew not: they put the most eager questions to us; the deep dejection of their countenances, for most of them looked pale and wretched, shewed how bitter was the state of suspense in which they were held; and it was not in our power to give them any consolation.

We set out very early one morning, a party of six, to make the tour of the walls of Constantinople. It was a very sultry and cloud-

less day; but any fatigue would have been repaid by such a promenade. The country in the immediate neighbourhood it is vain to attempt to describe. These ancient walls have a most noble and venerable appearance; they are about forty feet high in many parts, with their towers quite shrouded with ivy. But it was in vain we attempted to discover the place of the breach by which the Turks entered. The whole circuit of the walls is eighteen miles; but the line towards the sea is not so lofty. About a mile off, on the plain, is the lofty mound, where Mahmoud planted his standard, and first beheld the city; and, transported with its beauty, swore by the prophet never to stir thence till it was his own. It is directly opposite the gate of Tophcani, whence the unfortunate Constantine made his last sally, and, being mortally wounded, was borne to a shaded spot near by, where he expired. There was an Armenian coffee-house at this place, outside the wall: we entered it, and soon felt the reality of Oriental luxury. When exhausted by heat and fatigue, to recline on soft cushions by the side of a fountain, to drink Arabian coffee or sherbet, and take the Argillée, where the smoke, after passing through a vase of water, comes cooled through

a soft and curling tube to the mouth—all this acts on the senses with a powerful charm.

We afterwards came to the ruins of a small Greek church lately destroyed, which had been held in peculiar veneration, on account of some sacred fish preserved there in a pool with infinite care. At the storming of the city by Mahmoud, the wall near which this church stood was considered impregnable. One of the Greek priests was frying some fish, secure in his situation. On a messenger entering with the news that the Turks were forcing their way in, "I would as soon believe," exclaimed the priest, "that these fish would leap out of the pan, and swim about the room, as such an impossible event." Strange to say, the thing actually happened; and these sacred fish were preserved till lately inviolable, but they too have fallen, with their masters, before the sacrilegious Turks. While we were there, two poor Greeks drew nigh, with marks of the deepest reverence; and one of them shed tears at sight of the ruins. We then took a boat and landed not far from the Atmeidan, or chief square of the city: here stands the splendid mosque of Sultan Mahmoud; but no European at that time was allowed to enter the mosques, and we could only gaze on the outside of Saint Sophia. On

passing by one of the gates of the seraglio, it stood open and afforded a glimpse at the rich gardens within: but this was forbidden ground. At the foot of the gate lay a number of heads of the wretched Greeks, and the boys were tumbling them about like footballs. Near this was a large fountain of a strikingly rich and elegant appearance, carved and gilded on the four sides, with several streams of water gushing out. The care shown by this people to provide the luxury of water for the traveller cannot be too highly praised, and prevails all over the East. At intervals along the roads and within the city are erected neat stone fountains, placed, if possible, in the shade of trees: with a tin vessel suspended by a chain, to drink out of. We entered next the great bazaar, called the Bezestein. The bazaars are places of high interest to lounge in. Each trade has its own street and department. The circular roof, by which also the light enters, screens them from the heat. It is a great treat to sit beside one of the merchants on his elevated seat, and observe the variety of people of various ranks and costumes who pass before you. The Persian, the Armenian, the Nubian, and the Tartar merchants, arrived with caravans from the most distant parts of Asia; pil-

grims from Mecca, with their green turbans, and toil-worn yet haughty features—for each devotee holds his head higher after that enterprise; Dervishes, who traverse all parts of the empire, some half naked, others decked in various ornaments. The Turkish merchant comes here at an early hour, mounts into his little shop, sits in his soft slippers, with his pipe in his hand, and is supplied with coffee at intervals from the seller close by: he never asks for custom, but waits tranquilly till applied to. Thus he remains till sunset.

We spent a few days very delightfully at Therapia, at the house of Mr. L.; where a very singular adventure befel us. After sunset we set out on a long walk with Mr. and Mrs. L. and ascended the hill above the village. After enjoying a good while the wide and exquisite scenery which the path commanded—the whole channel of the Bosphorus, the Black Sea, and the Seven-hilled city in the distance—we proposed to return direct home; but the lady preferred, descending to the water-side, and to return by a more agreeable and circuitous path. The tents of the Turkish soldiers, wild and irregular troops lately arrived from Asia Minor, were scattered on the declivities around; and it was certainly not prudent to

be walking at so late an hour, and without a guard. We had nearly gained the foot of the hill when we were challenged by a sentinel from a bank above; several others soon came up, and arrested our progress. They conducted us to the tent of their chief, in the middle of which he was reclining on a carpet; but the entire ignorance of each other's language rendered the interview useless. The scene was very striking. The group of tents stood on a lofty bank at the water's edge, and the watch-fires at the entrance of each threw a vivid glare around: the whole was overspread by a noble group of trees, through the massy foliage of which the moonlight scarcely penetrated. We were then ordered to a spot outside the tent, where the ropes crossing formed a sort of barrier. They most probably took us for Greeks; for soon after leaving Therapia a party of soldiers came there in search of two Greek gentlemen and a lady; and our companion's dress, in a light blue turban and black veil, favoured this idea. The chief at last allowed us to enter his tent, where he again endeavoured to examine us. He was a bold-looking man, with a handsome black beard and very graceful gesture. His tent was dimly lighted by a large lamp, made of fine oiled

cotton; and many of his soldiers, wild-looking fellows, and variously armed, formed a circle round. At last they brought coffee and pipes, the pledges of peace, helping the lady last, (as an inferior being in their eyes,) who throughout had shown great coolness and presence of mind. We had no prospect now but of spending the night here; and the idea was any thing but pleasant. Mr. L. at last thought of sending a message to Georgi, a French servant in Therapia, who spoke Turkish. The chief in the mean time grew more friendly; he drew from beneath his pillow his beautiful Damascus sabre, two-edged for about half the blade's length, and inscribed with characters from the Koran. After a long delay Georgi at last arrived, and soon explained who we were; but the bey insisted on sending us under a guard before the Pacha, who with his army was encamped in the beautiful valley of Buyukderé, about two miles distant. Four soldiers attended us; and as we drew near the camp, it presented a scene truly interesting. The white tents in one part were ranged close to the edge of an inlet of the Bosphorus; and the light of their watch-fires, spread over the waters, mingled with the most soft and cloudless moonlight. As we advanced into the wood, large groups

of soldiers were seated smoking beneath the trees, and almost shrouded by their deep shade. Farther on in the valley, this camp of seven thousand troops was lighted by numerous lines of fires; or the blaze of the pine-torch suspended from the trees. We reached at last the tent of the Pacha, who was absent from the camp: but his chief officer, the Kiaia Bey, was there, with two more officers of rank. The tent was lined with crimson silk, and floored with a rich Persian carpet. The chief behaved in a very polite manner; apologized for his people having arrested us; but advised us never to walk out late again without a guard, in such disturbed times, as he could not be answerable for the behaviour of the irregular troops. Delicious Arabian coffee was then introduced in small china cups, placed in another cup of chased silver, according to the eastern custom. The spectacle around was truly barbaric; some large pine-torches, hung from the trees, were fiercely burning before the tent, and their light was thrown over the variously-coloured and splendid dresses of a number of soldiers, ranged around; while at a short distance, amongst the trees, the wild yet sweet Turkish music was played, accompanied with singing. The general

ordered a guard of six soldiers to accompany us back to Therapia, where we arrived at a late hour.

The mosque of the whirling dervishes afforded a singular exhibition during the feast of Beiram. Taking off our shoes at the entrance, we mingled among the assemblage of Turks that was seated on the floor. There was a great deal of simplicity and elegance in the building: a large circular space in the middle was inclosed by a railing, within which were near twenty dervishes. Above was a gallery, with a front of gilt lattice-work, which held a great number of spectators as well as the musicians. The devotions, if so they may be called, began with the chanting some parts of the Koran, by a dervise in the gallery, whose voice gradually became louder, and the dervishes below began to walk round in a circle, slowly, with their arms folded. At last the music struck up a lively strain; and one of them, advancing into the middle of the circle, began to spin round like a top. They all threw off the outer garment, and in their white vest set to spinning, with their arms extended in a line with the top of their heads, and their eyes closed. It is really incredible how they could endure such an incessant motion for such a length of time,

it being continued for more than an hour, with two or three intervals of rest of a few minutes each. Though so many in a small space, and the vest of each flung out like a parachute, they did not come in contact with each other.

The same day we had the pleasure of seeing the Sultan go in procession to the mosque. He landed from his splendid barge at the entrance of the fort, and advanced slowly on a most beautiful charger, surrounded by his guards and chief officers on foot. First came the janizaries in red; then the soldiers, who wore magnificent plumes of white feathers, in the form of a crescent, fixed on their gilded helmets: these carried battle-axes richly adorned. Immediately around the Sultan were his body-guards, uncommonly fine men, their turban and whole dress of the purest white. He himself is a very handsome man, with a mild and melancholy aspect, about forty years of age.

LETTER II.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

We took boat one afternoon, with two English gentlemen, for Scutari, to see the howling Dervishes. The mosque was very plain; having taken our seats in the gallery, we waited for some time, while the dervishes were engaged in drinking, as our guard, a captain of the janizaries, informed us, to excite themselves to go through the strange exhibition that followed. A young man of the order then mounted on a flight of steps without the door, and summoned, in a very loud and mournful voice, for nearly half an hour, the faithful to attend. The dervishes all entered, and, ranged in a long line, began to rock their bodies to and fro in simultaneous movement. But this motion soon became more rapid, and Alla and Mohammed, at first pronounced in a low and sad tone, burst

from their lips with violence. They then all threw off their outer garments, sprang from the ground, and threw their arms furiously about. As their imaginations became more heated, some stripped themselves nearly naked, others foamed at the mouth; one or two old men, exhausted, sank on the ground, and the cries of God and the Prophet might be heard afar off. It was a singular spectacle of enthusiasm and hypocrisy combined; but what ensued was more disgusting, for they took red-hot irons and applied them to their legs and feet, and other parts of their bodies, still howling out amidst their pain the name of the Eternal, in whose honour, they would have their credulous assembly believe, they suffered all this. A great part of the dervishes are notorious libertines and profligates, as the better informed Turks are often heard to call them. They consist of various orders; some live in monasteries; others lead a wandering life through different parts of the empire, chiefly subsisting on the hospitality of the faithful. In the island of Cyprus I met with a young dervise of this kind; his features were fair and effeminate, and his long hair fell in ringlets on his neck and bosom; on the latter he wore several pieces of stained glass, fancifully disposed; his appear-

ance betokened any thing but devotion. Others are to be seen roving about with thick dishevelled hair, wild looks, and half naked; these profess poverty and self-denial, and are held most in reverence by the people. Many of these men, however, are sincere teachers and examples of their religion, and lead the life of pilgrims, or fix on some secluded spot, where they live abstemiously, and repay with their counsels the simple presents of the people. The most eminent of them are termed Santons, and have handsome monuments built on their graves in the shade of trees, which are ever after regarded with peculiar veneration.

The fast of Ramadan ended a few days ago. As rigidly kept as that of the Jews:—the Turk finds it severe enough to remain from one sunset to the next without a morsel; then coffee and his pipe are indeed his solace, for these are permitted. With what tumultuous joy did the believers deport themselves in a coffee-house not far from the English palace! They danced wildly in groups to the sound of the guitar and tambour, embraced one another as they talked of the night near at hand, when the first appearance of the new moon should announce that Ramadan was over, and Beiram was begun. It came at last; on that night

every minaret of the grand mosques was illumined from top to bottom with innumerable rows of lamps. You could distinguish those of Achmed, Suleimanieh, and St. Sophia; it was a peculiar and splendid sight; and the vast city and its people seemed to be hushed in the stillness of midnight, waiting for the signal of festivity. The Imauns from the tops of the highest minarets eagerly bent their looks to catch the first glimpse of the new moon; the moment it was perceived, loud and joyful shouts, which spread instantly all over the city, announced that the hour of indulgence was come, and full compensation for all their denials. It was really pleasing to observe, the next day, the looks of kindness and almost fraternal feeling which they cast on each other. The poor man is often seen at this period to take the hand, and kiss the cheek of the rich and haughty, who returns the salutation as to his equal, a brother in the glorious faith of their Prophet, a co-heir to the privileges of his Paradise. Delight was pictured in every countenance; every one put on his finest apparel, and the sound of music was heard on every side, mingled with songs in honour of their religion. We are too apt to divest the Turks of domestic virtues, yet one cannot but

be struck with their extreme fondness for their children; beautiful beings they often are, beyond those of any other country. In Damascus, I have many times stopped in the streets to gaze at children of six or eight years of age, whose extreme loveliness it was impossible not to admire;—and afterwards in Tripolitza, I cannot forget how the love of a Turkish lady to her two youngest children risked the murder of herself, her son and daughter, and her most intimate friend.

The population of Constantinople has been much overrated: according to General Sebastiani's calculation, while he was ambassador, it does not exceed four hundred thousand; and the suburbs of Péra, Galata, Scutari, &c. with the line of villages along the shores of the Bosphorus, contain eight hundred thousand more. A considerable part of the ground the city covers is taken up with gardens. The areas of the mosques are generally planted with trees, and a fountain, sometimes richly ornamented, stands at the entrance; for a Turk seldom enters without first washing his feet; and, laying aside his shoes, he treads in his soft slippers. The solemnity of this people at their devotions is very striking; whether in the mosque or in the open air, they appear entirely abstracted from all around; and you would

think, from the expression of their features, that the spirit and the senses were alike devoted to this sacred duty; they are generally silent, save that the sound of Alla, pronounced in a low and humble tone, is often heard. The mosques are in general unadorned, and the architecture quite simple; the name of God and passages from the Koran are inscribed in gold letters on the walls. A lofty corridor goes all round the interior of the building; the circular space in the middle, where the pulpit of the Imaun stands, is lighted by a dome at the top. The assembly range themselves beneath the corridor on mats and carpets; the greater part of the time is occupied in prayer.

The habits of an Oriental are very simple; the absence of every kind of public amusement and dissipation, with his rigid adherence to all the usages of his fathers, makes one day the picture of every other. A Turk of good condition rises with the sun; and as he sleeps on soft cushions, divesting himself but of a small part of his dress, it costs him little trouble at the toilet. He offers up his prayer, and then breakfasts on a cup of coffee, some sweetmeats, and the luxury of his pipe. Perhaps he will read the Koran, or the glowing poetry of Hafiz and Sadi; for a knowledge

of the Persian is the frequent accomplishment of the upper ranks of both sexes. He then orders his Arab horse, and rides for two or three hours, or exercises with the jerrid, and afterwards dines about mid-day on a highly seasoned pilaw. In the afternoon, the coffee-houses, whither the Eastern story-tellers resort, are favourite places of entertainment; or seated in his cool kiosk, on the banks of the Bosphorus, he yields to his useless but delightful habit of musing. But the decline of day brings the Turk's highest joys: he then dines on a variety of seasoned dishes, drinks his iced sherbet, enjoys probably a party of his friends, and afterwards visits the harem, where his beloved children are brought him; and his wife or wives, if he has more than one, with their attendants and slaves, exert all their powers of fascination for their lord. The Nubian brings him the richest perfumes; the Circassian, excelling in her loveliness, presents the spiced coffee and the rare confection made by her own hands, and tunes her guitar or lute, the sounds of which are mingled with the murmurs of the fountain on the marble pavement beneath....

The utter desolation of the unhappy Greeks forces itself on one's notice every day. The

spacious quarter of the Fanal, entirely inhabited by them, is now nearly deserted. The animating spectacle which the Bosphorus often presented at evening, of their pleasure-boats filled with Greek beauty and gaiety, has quite disappeared. Two fine palaces, which stood at the water's edge, were inhabited by two brothers, who held financial situations under the government. Being suspected, their heads were cut off on the same day; and their palaces, as we sailed by them, were forsaken. The sweet shaded scenes around the hamlets and cottages on the shore, where this once happy people delighted to dance in groups to the mandoline, and sing the songs of their native land, are now mute. At times, in walking along the Bosphorus, you may meet some wretched Greek flying from his pursuers, or see some murdered body floating near the shore. I mingled one day in a group of the lowest Turks, who were gazing on the corpse of one of their victims with an appearance of great satisfaction. One of them took hold of the body with a hook to throw it into the sea; but another wretch instantly stepped forwards and stripped it first of all its clothing, when it was cast naked into the water. On visiting a fine khan, near the Fanal, which was fre-

quented by the rich Greek merchants, not a being was to be seen save two Persian merchants, seated smoking in the open area, with pale and still features, and their long beards dyed black. Much of the effects of the captive or slain proprietors still remained in the apartments.

What tales of blood might be told of this war of extermination! Just before our landing at the town of the Dardanelles, a large village on the opposite shore was attacked at night by a body of Turkish soldiers, and men, women, and children put to the sword, to the amount of several hundreds.

In the cruel evacuation of Parga, when its poor people knew not where to find an asylum, and each family had a distress all its own, a father and mother—I knew the circumstance well—offered an English officer their only and beautiful daughter. "Take her, signior," they said, "from the misery around, save her from Ali Pacha, treat her always with kindness, and she shall live with you." The young Greek still resides with him, but her parents most probably perished. Here, separations like this might be said to be mild, compared to some scenes, where the parents were butchered

before the eyes of their children, who were borne away for the pleasures of the captor.

At Smyrna, after the first massacre in the streets, the Greeks shut themselves in their houses, but several times they made attempts to escape in boats. Having watched that the shore was clear of the enemy, they hurried on board with their families, to gain some neutral vessel in the harbour. The Turkish soldiers quickly gathered on the beach, and kept up a fire of musquetry on them. It was sad to hear the cries from the boats, and see the poor fugitives dropping as the bullets struck them.

After I left Smyrna, a singular circumstance occurred to an intimate friend and fellow-traveller, who chanced to spend a short time there. He was sitting in his apartment in the hotel one day, when a young and respectable Greek woman entered, and threw herself at his feet, weeping bitterly. She implored him to save her life, and procure her escape. Her friends had been sacrificed, and there was no one she could trust in; and the dread of being every moment discovered by the Turks was insupportable. There was no listening to this in vain. He generously sought for her an asylum under English protection, and in a few

days procured her a passage in a vessel sailing for Greece, where she was sure to find friends; and presented her with a supply of money.

Among the pleasant rides around the city is that to the Aqueducts of Justinian, and the forest of Belgrade, about fourteen miles off. Having procured horses, we left Pera early, attended by Mustapha, an honest janizary, well known to every traveller, and accustomed to go remote journeys through the empire. At a few miles' distance is the Palace of the Sweet Waters, a favourite summer residence of the Sultan. Proceeding through a pleasing country, we reached the lofty Aqueduct of Justinian, and soon after that of Bourgas. The small lakes in the heart of the forest, their lofty banks darkly covered to the water's edge, afford some scenes of peculiar beauty. We halted at a village inhabited by a few Greeks, and entered a poor coffee-house to get some refreshment. They soon produced a dish of mutton and some fruit; and, what was more acceptable, some very good white wine. In the midst of the meal some Turkish cavalry approached, amusing themselves with throwing the jerrid at each other. The affrighted Greeks instantly hid the wine, and brought in its place a vessel of water. We wished the

Turks at Mecca for spoiling our dinner: they entered, and made some very pointed inquiries; but Mustapha soon satisfied them, and, after demanding some refreshment, they departed. When the heat had abated, we directed our course towards Buyukderé: the prospect from the hills, of that village and its valley, with the Turkish camp still pitched in it, the Black Sea beyond, and the river beneath, flowing between the shores of Europe and Asia, was noble in the extreme. It being evening, we turned down to Therapia; and being kindly pressed by Mr. L. to spend a day or two with him again, sent the janizary with the horses back to the city. The next day being Sunday, the garden of the French ambassador's palace, with its long rows of trees on the eminences, afforded a cool and retired promenade. Mr. M. a merchant, who lived close by, dined with us: we visited his garden in the evening, and taking seats on the terrace just over the water, had pipes brought. He was an elderly man, and a bachelor, and had left Scotland long ago. He talked of his native land with deep pleasure, and of the days of his youth. Singular, as the sun was going down on the exquisite scenery of the Bosphorus, stretched like fairy-land around us, to

think and to talk so of the scenes of "lang syne," and all their dear associations! A cup of the whisky, and a song of the Highlands, with a sight of the kilt, or his "ain dear lassie," would have been more dear to him than the Arabian coffee we were sipping; the evening-call to prayers from the mosque, or the shrouded and still forms of the women stealing along.

The condition of the women in Turkey has little resemblance to slavery, and the pity given to it by Europeans has its source more in imagination than reality. From their naturally retired and indolent habits, they care less about exercise in the open air than ourselves. They are very fond of the bath, where large parties of them frequently meet and spend the greater part of the day, displaying their rich dresses to each other, conversing, and taking refreshments. From this practice, and the little exposure to the sun, the Turkish ladies have often an exquisite delicacy of complexion. They often sail in their pleasure-boats to various parts of the Bosphorus, or walk veiled to the favourite promenades near the cemetery, or in the gardens of Dolma Batcke, with their attendants; and they sometimes walk disguised through the streets of the city, with-

out any observation. The government of an English wife over her own household does not equal that of the Turkish, which is absolute, the husband scarcely ever interfering in the domestic arrangements; and in case of a divorce her portion is always given up.

The practice of eating opium does not appear to be so general with the Turks as is commonly believed. But there is a set of people at Constantinople devoted to this drug; and the Theriakis, as they are called, have that hollow and livid aspect, the fixed dulness of the eye at one time, or the unnatural brightness at another, which tell too plainly of this destructive habit. They seldom live beyond thirty; lose all appetite for food; and as their strength wastes, the craving for the vivid excitement of opium increases. It is useless to warn a Theriakee that he is hurrying to the grave. He comes in the morning to a large coffee-house, a well-known resort for this purpose, close to the superb mosque of Suleimanieh. Having swallowed his pill, he seats himself in the portico in front, which is shaded by trees. He has no wish to change his position, for motion would disturb his happiness, which he will tell you is indescribable. Then the most wild and blissful reveries come

crowding on him. His gaze fixed on the river beneath, covered with the sails of every nation; or on the majestic shores of Asia opposite, or vacantly raised where the gilded minarets of Suleimanieh ascend on high:—if external objects heighten, as is allowed, the illusions of opium, the Turk is privileged. There, till the sun sets on the scene, the fancy of the Theriakee revels in love, in splendour, or pride. He sees the beauties of Circassia striving whose charms shall most delight him; the Ottoman fleet sails beneath his flag as the Capitan Pacha: or seated in the divan, turbaned heads are bowed before him, and voices hail the favoured of Alla and the Sultan. But evening comes, and he awakes to a sense of wretchedness and helplessness, to a gnawing hunger which is an effect of his vice; and hurries home, to suffer till the morning sun calls him to his paradise again.

In this city you cannot proceed far without remarking the great number of coffee-houses and sweetmeat-shops. The former are attended from sunrise till night. Each person brings his small tobacco-bag in his pocket, which he is very ready to offer to a stranger who is unprovided. Whatever residence a traveller enters, from that of the prince to that of

the peasant, the universal compliment is the pipe and coffee; the latter drunk without milk, and the former of a very fine and mild quality. The janizary, a tall fierce-looking fellow, who attended me through the streets as a guard, and would talk very coolly by the way of the different Greeks he had murdered, used to amuse me at seeing him stop at a sweetmeat-shop, and purchase what would please a child in England, and devour it with as much fondness.

The situation of the English merchants settled here, is not an enviable one. Reduced to their own contracted circle, and that destitute, with one or two exceptions, of female society; no public amusements, library, or music, there is a sad monotony in their life. They are very hospitable to strangers, and do not spare any attentions to make a residence there agreeable. The chief resource to a traveller is at Lord Strangford's. At his table, or at the evening parties, were to be met individuals of different nations, chiefly Armenians and Franks; but there was a want of vivacity and interest in them, arising from the restraint produced by the unfortunate state of affairs, and all interchange of visits with the other ambassadors being at an end. At the palace at this time

was Lady G. T., a younger sister of Lady H. Stanhope, and possessed of the same spirit of enterprise and courage, though less romantic and Oriental. She had just arrived from Persia, by way of Georgia, and had travelled great part of the way on horseback. At Tebriz an offer was made her of an introduction to the seraglio of the Prince Royal of Persia; but it was declined. Such an offer occurs but once in a person's life. The beautiful author of the "Letters from Turkey" would have embraced it with delight, for she was a favourite with the Oriental women, and no subsequent traveller has ever had her opportunities of knowing and describing them, or perhaps ever will. What can be more exquisite than her picture of Fatima, the Pacha of Adrianople's bride, endowed with that mild dignity and sweetness of carriage so often possessed by the Turkish ladies, and seated amidst her handmaids, directing their tasks of embroidery; each of whom was selected for her beauty, but herself "so gloriously beautiful" as to excel all her visitor had ever beheld?

Before leaving Stamboul, it is but justice to say something of the singular honesty of the Turks. On landing at Galati, my effects were carried by a porter; and proceeding up one of

the crowded streets, we entirely lost sight of him, and turned towards a coffee-house, as I concluded he had made off with them; but the Swedish captain of the vessel, who had been here before, declared such a circumstance was never known here. In a short time we observed the poor fellow returning down the street, and looking most anxiously on every side.—In the bazaars a merchant will often go away and leave his shop and effects exposed, without the least concern. In their dealings it is rare to find any attempt to defraud; and in the whole of my journey through various parts of the empire, often lodging in the humblest cottages, and in the most remote situations, I never suffered the loss of the most trifling article among the Turks.

An amusing incident befel Mr. R., a gentleman attached to the palace, during our stay here. He had lost a leg while in the navy, and, being very desirous of visiting the great bazaar, he rode through it on horseback; a privilege used by none but Turks, and in these disturbed times rather dangerous: A Bostandgi Bashee, an officer of some rank, being enraged on observing this, came up and struck with his sabre at Mr. R.'s wooden leg. The Turk's astonishment at seeing no blood flow, or wound inflicted, was

very great. He lifted his sabre and cut with good will through part of the leg; but finding it all useless, he drew back without uttering a word, and gazed intently on the Frank.

The janizaries, of whom there are fifty thousand at present in and around Constantinople, are uncommonly fine men. If these men would submit to European discipline and the use of the bayonet, they would have little reason to fear a contest with the Russians, to whom they bear a deadly hatred. The unfortunate Selim's resolution to bring these haughty troops into discipline, cost him his throne. About two years after his relative Mahmoud was made emperor, the janizaries began to regret that they had ever deposed Selim; for he was as eminent for his amiable qualities as for his personal beauty. A large body of them advanced tumultuously to the foot of the palace walls, and with loud cries demanded Selim. That prince, who had been kept a close prisoner, heard with the liveliest emotion the clamours of the janizaries. Mahmoud instantly ordered the Kislar Aga, the chief of the black eunuchs, with two mutes, to despatch him. This man, the instrument of the Sultan's crimes as well as pleasures, is horribly ugly, and supposed to have great influence with his

master. As they broke into his apartment, Selim instantly knew their purpose; and possessing great strength, he struck down the mutes on each side, and was making his way out of the door, to throw himself over the wall among the janizaries, which would have given him the empire again, but the Kislar Aga wounded him in such a manner, that Selim fainted with the agony of pain, when the bow-string was instantly placed round his neck, and his body thrown over to the soldiers. The janizaries uttered loud lamentations, and knelt round the body, weeping bitterly; but, dismayed by his death, they retired without any further effort.

LETTER III.

ALEXANDRIA.

We left at last the "Pride of the East," at sight of which the Prophet might have smiled with much greater reason than he did at that of Grand Cairo. We sailed from Constantinople on board an English vessel bound to Smyrna. Having cast anchor near the town of the Dardanelles on the following morning, we went on shore to visit the site of the ancient Abydos, about two miles distant. A lofty tumulus, with some remains of walls on the side towards the sea, mark the spot. The distance across the strait to where Sestos is supposed to have stood, is scarcely a mile; and any strong and practised swimmer might pass it without much difficulty. I was little aware then, that this passage was destined to be a fatal one, a few weeks afterwards, to a young

and very amiable traveller; who perished, in consequence of attempting to imitate Leander and Lord B., of a violent fever, brought on by over-exertion, and the being so long in the water. It was a lovely moonlight night when we lost sight of the shores of the Dardanelles; and a fine wind bore us towards Scio. On board were two natives of the northern part of England, who had gone to Persia with the hope of getting rich by engaging in a cotton-manufactory, set on foot at Tebriz by a young English merchant. The latter had lost all his little property in the attempt, having been deluded, he said, by false representations; and at last, after a long and difficult journey over land with the two natives of Lancashire, had succeeded in reaching Constantinople. To hear the latter, in their broad provincial dialect, relate their adventures in Persia— their passage over mountains covered with snow and plains parched with heat, half starved at one time and abused or pursued at another—was very amusing. Amidst the tumults and massacres of Stamboul, a piece of peculiar good fortune befel me, in the engaging my romantic and invaluable servant, Michelle Milovich, a Sclavonian: had I been a Moslemin, I would ever after have blessed the Prophet for causing that day to

shine on me. He spoke seven languages, had read a great deal, and travelled yet more, was perfectly brave, conversed with much intelligence, and to wander through new scenes was his passionate delight. "I have heard, Sir," he first addressed me, "you are going to Egypt, and shall be very happy to attend you there. I have travelled over the greater part of the world, but cannot die in peace till I have seen the Pyramids and the ruins of Thebes." My only companion in many a solitude and sorrow, more than once the preserver of my life, and always devoted and faithful; how can I ever think of him without attachment, or forget his tears when we parted?

On the fourth morning, as the sun rose, we were close to the Isle of Scio. Its appearance is very singular: six or eight miles from the shore is a lofty chain of barren and purple rocks, which shut out all view of the interior, and the space between these and the sea is covered with delightful gardens and verdure, which inclose the town on every side, except towards the main.

The fine climate of this isle, the profusion of delicious fruits, the beauty of its women, and the friendly and hospitable character of the people, caused it to be preferred by travellers

to any other of the Greek islands. In the evening, when the setting sun was resting on the craggy mountains and the rich gardens at their feet, the shores and the shaded promenades around the town were filled with the Greek population, among which were multitudes of the gay and handsome women of Scio, distinguished for their frank and agreeable manners.

On landing, we went to the Consul's house: he was a Sciote, and received us with much civility. His wife and daughter, who were both very plain, made their appearance, and sweetmeats and fruit, with coffee, were handed round. The day was sultry, and the watermelons and oranges, which were in great abundance, were very refreshing.

The unfortunate Sciotes were the most effeminate and irresolute of all the Greeks. The merchants lived in a style of great luxury, and the houses of many of them were splendidly furnished. From the commencement of the revolution, they contrived to preserve a strict neutrality; and, though often implored and menaced by their countrymen, refused to fight for the liberties of Greece, or risk the drawing on themselves the vengeance of the Turks. So well had they kept up appearances, that the Otto-

man fleet never molested them: till, unfortunately, one day a Greek leader entered the harbour with some ships, having a body of troops on board, who were landed to attack the citadel, in which was a small Turkish garrison; and the Sciotes, fancying the hour of freedom was come, passed from one extreme to the other, rose tumultuously, and joined the troops. The fort was soon taken, and the garrison, together with the Turks who were in the town, was put to the sword. This was scarcely accomplished, when the Ottoman fleet entered the harbour; and the Greek forces, who had come from Samos, too inferior in number to cope with them, instantly embarked, and took to flight, leaving the island to its fate. Those islanders who had taken part with them, consisted chiefly of the lower orders; and two hundred of the chief merchants and magistrates repaired on board the ship of the Capitan Pacha, and made the most solemn protestations of innocence, and unqualified submission to the Porte. The admiral received them with great civility, expressed himself willing to forget all that had passed, and ordered coffee and a variety of refreshments. But no sooner had the Pacha landed his forces, about six thousand men, than he gave the signal for the massacre.

The details given me afterwards by Sciotes who had escaped were enough to harrow up the soul. During the massacre, the Turks, exhausted, sheathed at times their bloody sabres and ataghans, and, seated beneath the trees on the shore, took their pipes and coffee, chatted, or fell asleep in the shade. In the course of a few hours they rose refreshed, and began to slay indiscriminately all who came in their way. It was vain to implore mercy; the young and gay Sciotes, but a few days before the pride of the islands, found their loveliness no shield then, but fell stabbed before their mothers' eyes, or, flying into the gardens, were caught by their long and braided tresses, and quickly despatched. The wild and confused cries of pain and death were mingled with the fierce shouts of Mohammed and vengeance; the Greek was seen kneeling for pity, or flying with desperate speed, and the Turkish soldier rushing by with his reeking weapon, or holding in his hand some head dripping with blood. The close of day brought little reprieve; the moonlight spreading vividly over the town, the shores, and the rich groves of fruit-trees, rendered escape or concealment almost impossible. But, as the work of death paused at intervals from very weariness, the loud sounds

of horror and carnage sunk into those of more hushed and bitter woe. The heart-broken wail of parents over their dying and violated child —the hurried and shuddering tones of despair of those to whom a few hours would bring inevitable death—the cry of the orphan and widowed around the mangled forms of their dearest relatives, mingled with curses on the murderer, went up to heaven! But the pause for mourning was short—the stillness of the night was suddenly broken by the clash of arms and the dismal war-cry of the Ottoman soldiery, "Death!—death to the Greeks—to the enemies of the Prophet—Allah il Allah;"—and the Capitan Pacha in the midst, with furious gestures, urged on his troops to the slaughter. Every house and garden were strewed with corpses: beneath the orange-trees, by the fountain side, on the rich carpet, and the marble pavement, lay the young, the beautiful, and the aged, in the midst of their loved and luxurious retreats. Day after day passed; and lying as they fell, alone, or in groups, no hand bore them to their graves, while survivors yet remained to perish. At last, when all was over, they were thrown in promiscous heaps, the senator and the delicate and richly attired woman of rank mingled with the lowest of the

populace, into large pits dug for the purpose, which served as universal sepulchres.

Twenty thousand are computed to have perished during the few days the massacre lasted. Happy were the few who could pass the barrier of rocky mountains, beyond which they were for the time secure, or who were received into some of the boats and vessels on the coast, and thus snatched from their fate. It was my fortune afterwards to meet several times with these wretched fugitives, wandering in search of an asylum; so pale, worn, and despairing, they presented a picture of exquisite misery—girls of a tender age on foot, sinking beneath the heat and toil of the way, yet striving to keep up with the horses that bore the sick and disabled of the party: and mothers with their infants whom they had saved, while their husbands and sons had perished. One who had been a lady in her own land, weeping bitterly, related to me the murder of all her children, who were five young men. Many a young Sciote woman was to be seen, her indulgent home lost for ever, her beauty and vivacity quite gone, with haggard and fearful looks seeking in other lands for friends whom she might never find.

About two or three hours walk along the

shore is the spot where Homer is said to have kept his school; it is a rock within which are still visible the remains of seats cut out. The poet certainly displayed an excellent taste in his choice of a situation: a noble group of trees stands close by, and a fountain of the purest water gushes out in their shade; in front, and around, are the beautiful harbour, and cottages amidst delicious gardens; and behind, precipices of purple rocks rising in their nakedness. The Turks are fond of enjoying the coolness and shade of this spot; the follower of the Prophet smoking his pipe and performing his ablutions where Mæonides was inspired!

A few miles from the town, and approached by a rugged path, is the large convent of Nehahmonce. The chapel is richly ornamented, the dome being formed of different kinds of marble, varied with pieces of richly stained glass, and having altogether a strange appearance; the lofty mountains around have many of their abrupt declivities covered with firs. The condition and advantages of the Greek clergy are much superior to those of the Catholics. The former are allowed to marry if they have not taken priests' orders; and appear to lead a pleasanter life, and are more free and courteous in their manners, than

their brethren of Rome; and their convents are infinitely more neat and clean. This monastery of Nehahmonce allows every traveller the privilege of remaining several days under its roof, where he will find a comfortable chamber and good fare; for if there are any wines or provisions *par excellence* in their neighbourhood, monks are sure to have them.

The soil of this island produces an abundance of excellent fruits, the fig, olive, orange, almond, and pomegranate; the climate is healthy and delightful; and, with the exception of the Isle of Rhodes, a stranger could not find a more desirable residence. . . . . The red wine is the most esteemed in the island; a small part only is exported, the Greeks making too good a use of it themselves. It cannot greatly soothe or propitiate a Turk's feelings towards the despised and infidel Greeks, to see them quaffing with keen delight the rich juice of the grape, and giving loose in the moment to unbounded gaiety, while he, poor forbidden follower of Islam! must solace himself gravely with the pure fountain, his meagre sherbet, or at most a cup of the coffee of Mocha. At the distance of some miles in the interior, are seen at intervals the country seats of the rich Greeks and Turks; very handsome residences, built of

stone, with luxuriant gardens adjoining, and placed often in romantic situations; and such a number of aromatic shrubs are scattered over the country, that the air is perfumed with their fragrance..... The gum-mastich grows here, which is used by the Grecian and Turkish women: but the former strive to heighten their charms by adding paint; they go unveiled, and are gaily and richly dressed.

But no aid or ornament—not even the faint remains of the adored features of antiquity—can invest the Greek with the dignity of air and carriage, and the elegance and mildness of manners of the Ottoman lady....But it is hard to leave a Grecian isle without feelings of regret. Of the different countries it has been my delight to visit, were I to choose a residence, it would not be on the shores of the Bosphorus, with the mountains of Europe and Asia rising from the water's edge; their sides covered with groves, villages, and delicious retreats, and between their feet the deep and lovely glens which put a Moslemin in mind of Paradise—nor in the glorious plain of Damascus, with its rushing streams and gardens of unrivalled luxury, embracing the sacred city in their deep bosom—but in some isle like Scio or Rhodes, of a pure and equal climate;

its shaded walks leading through woods of orange, almond, and citron; above which rise its pointed and purpled mountains, their wild bosoms covered with a thousand fragrant shrubs, the odours of which fill the air: where the sun sets in glory on the wave, and gilds the summits of other isles, which appear all around at the horizon's verge; and the moonlight brings softer scenery, with the guitar, the sweet island-songs, and the murmur on the shore.

We left Scio at last, and on the following evening arrived in the harbour of Smyrna. It is of great extent, and you sail a long time between its shores of rugged mountains, with a line of rich verdure and trees at their feet, ere you arrive at the city, situated at its very extremity. Smyrna possesses a large population, and an extensive commerce: the streets are narrow, but the quarter inhabited by the Frank merchants and consuls contains a number of excellent houses, with terraced roofs, which afford a pleasant promenade. Many of the Europeans intermarry with the Greek families; and the Smyrniote ladies, thus blending Oriental and Frank manners and customs, are considered extremely attractive;—the turbaned head bent over the harp and piano, and

the Scotch and Irish melodies sung on the shores of Asia, are no common fascinations. —The Turkish burying-ground stands on the slope of the hill at a small distance from the town, near that of the Jews, and is encircled by a deep grove of cypress-trees. ... No guard or shade around a cemetery can be so suitable as that of this noble tree: with its waveless and mournful foliage, it looks the very emblem of mortality. The Orientals love that every thing should be sad and impressive round the abodes of the dead, which they never approach but with the deepest reverence; and they often sit for hours in their Kiosques on the Bosphorus, gazing with mournful pleasure on the shores of Asia, where the ashes of their fathers are laid; for the rich Turk of Stamboul generally wishes to be carried after death to the Asiatic side, which he believes destined to be the last resting-place and empire of his countrymen, when the fair men from the North shall have driven them from Europe."

The society of Smyrna, consisting of the European merchants and their families, who mixed together on the most friendly footing, was very agreeable: the public rooms, called the Casino, handsomely fitted up, were open at eight o'clock every evening, and possessed

a reading-room; and travellers and strangers from all parts met there to take refreshments and enjoy the society; and balls were occasionally held. But the face of things was entirely changed at the time of our residence there. The Casino and its amusements were closed, there was little interchange of visits between European families, and the charming promenades around the town were deserted, the whole of the Greek families of the better order having fled: the bazars looked silent and empty, and the numerous caravans from the interior no longer arrived. The village of Bournabat, composed chiefly of the handsome country-houses of the European merchants, is distant a few miles from the city, and affords a very pleasant ride to the traveller, the country around being well cultivated, and adorned with groves of olive and other trees. The storks are seen in great numbers at particular seasons around Smyrna and at Bournabat: they are very tame, and are regarded with a superstitious feeling by the Turks. They sometimes frequent the ruins of temples and villages; but their appearance, and the noise they make, harmonize little with the aspect of desolation and decay: the clusters of pigeons of many-coloured plumage, which flew

around and nestled amidst the ruins of the Temple of the Sun at Balbec, had an effect much more in harmony with the splendid remains and scenery of the plain so truly and beautifully described in "Lalla Rookh."

In Smyrna we lodged at the hotel kept by an Italian. The windows of the apartments commanded a fine view of the bay and its romantic shores. Several Greek priests and merchants dined at the table d'hôte, where we had a medley of Greek and European dishes. They looked very care-worn and suspicious; and they had good reason, for they could not go out of doors without danger of being murdered. One morning, as I stood in the street, a Greek servant, for declining to buy meat at the stall of a Candiote butcher not far off, was stabbed by him with his long knife, and fell bleeding on the pavement.....About fifty Greeks got on board a Ragusan vessel, in order to escape, the captain having been paid a large sum of money by them. Instead of instantly making off, he continued to loiter in the harbour, in spite of the warnings of the consul; when one night he was surrounded by three Turkish vessels, and all on board were seized. The captain and crew were hanged, and the Greeks were beheaded in a small square in the

city, at sunrise, during our stay.....The French consul, to his immortal honour, has saved the lives of hundreds of the Greeks, by his active and spirited interference; and has rescued them from the hands of the soldiery, about to put them to death. In walking through the city you see these unfortunate people looking over the walls, and half-opening their doors, and listening to every passing sound. At any sudden noise in the streets, the faces of the women—and some of them beautiful—were seen thrust out of the windows of the lofty houses, where they had taken refuge; thereby exposing themselves to fresh danger, yet unable to repress their anxiety and curiosity. The only Greek I ever saw, whose face and form in any way realized the *beau idéal* of antiquity, was at the entrance of a poor dwelling in the skirts of the city: her fine tall figure, reclined against the wall as she stood, and her head bent towards some unhappy countrywomen, whom she was addressing, gave additional interest to the perfect symmetry of her noble and classic features.

The inextinguishable lightness and versatility of character of the Greeks are real blessings in their present situation; no vicissitudes appear to strike them with surprise or despair: active,

enterprising, and indefatigable, they possess the materials for making excellent soldiers: vain to excess, and ever sanguine in all their hopes and undertakings, I heard them exclaim, as they marched out of Tripolitza to attack the Turks, "We have beat them with sticks ere now; and shall we not drive them before us with our swords?"—Call on a Greek to die, and he will take leave of the world, to appearance, passionless and undismayed: bring the guitar and the wine, and he will dance, talk with infinite gaiety, and sing the Moriote songs all the night long.

A circumstance of a very interesting and affecting kind occurred at this time in one of the Greek isles. A number of the islanders, terrified at the approach of a Turkish force, hurried on board a large boat, and pushed off from the land. The wife of one of them, a young woman of uncommon loveliness, seeing her husband departing, stood on the shore, stretching out her hands towards the boat, and imploring, in the most moving terms, to be taken on board. The Greek saw it without concern or pity, and, instead of aiding her escape, bade his companions hasten their flight. This unfortunate woman, left unprotected in the midst of her enemies, struggled through scenes of

difficulty and danger, of insult and suffering, till her failing health and strength, with a heart broken by sorrow, brought her to her death-bed. She had never heard from her husband; and, when wandering amongst the mountains, or lying hid in some wretched habitation, or compelled to urge her flight amidst cruel fatigues, her affection for him, and the hope of meeting him again, bore up her courage through all. He came at last, when the enemy had retreated and the Greeks had sought their homes again; and learning her situation, was touched with the deepest remorse. But all hope of life was then extinguished; her spirit had been tried to the utmost; love had changed to aversion, and she refused to see or forgive him. There is at times in the character of the Greek women, as more than one occasion occurred of observing, a strength and sternness that is truly remarkable. Her sister and relations were standing round her bed; and never in the days of her health and love did she look so touchingly beautiful as then: her fine dark eyes were turned on them with a look, as if she mourned not to die, but still felt deeply her wrongs; the natural paleness of her cheek was crimsoned with a hectic hue, and the rich tresses of her black hair fell dishevelled by her

side. Her friends, with tears, entreated her to speak to and forgive her husband; but she turned her face to the wall, and waved her hand for him to be gone. Soon the last pang came over her, and then affection conquered; —she turned suddenly round, raised a look of forgiveness to him, placed her hand in his, and died.

We took passage on board a French ship bound to Alexandria, and for three days had a favourable wind, when we fell in with a division of the Greek fleet: they obliged us to bring to, and sent an armed boat on board to demand our destination and cargo, and whatever intelligence we could give them. These Greeks behaved very civilly: their best ships were merchant-vessels turned into those of war, and carried twenty guns: they were from the isle of Hydra, the natives of which are the best and boldest sailors in their navy. The wind failed us; and we were put to our resources to pass the time agreeably; but in French vessels a passenger is always less at a loss in calms and baffling winds than in any other, as the men seldom lose their gaiety and good spirits. The mate, who seemed to have the chief command, was a fine and animated young Frenchman, who had a small collection of interesting

books; the nominal captain, Monsieur Gras by name, was a little fat man, with a serious and melancholy aspect. Every morning and evening, before breakfast and supper, the crew were summoned to the poop, and he recited prayers in a sad and distinct tone, to which they all responded. On board was a most motley assemblage of passengers: a fat young German, who was on his way to Grand Cairo, to set up for a doctor, and cure the Turks and Arabs without knowing a word of their language; he was accompanied by a sprightly young Italian woman, who had left her dear land to live with this phlegmatic fellow on the banks of the Nile: his pipe scarcely ever quitted his mouth, and he told marvellous tales, sitting on the deck with a naked neck and bosom *à l'oriental.* There was also a tailor from Italy, of a pale countenance and spare figure, destined for Alexandria to exercise his calling; and he put one in mind of the button-maker from Sheffield, who came on speculation to Constantinople with a cargo of his material, and found the Turks never wore buttons. A third was a dog-merchant, also an Italian, with his wife: he had a number of dogs of a very fine breed, to dispose of in Egypt, if he could find purchasers among the Franks or the faithful. These three

worthies, and their two *chères amies* (the tailor having no tender companion with him) travelled in great harmony together, and, while the baffling winds lasted, afforded no small amusement. But at last we drew near the low and sandy shores around Alexandria. How sweet after a voyage the first sight of land is, every traveller has felt; and Pompey's Pillar on the eminence above the town, the canal from the Nile just beyond, and a thousand recollections attached to the residence of Cleopatra, gave an intense interest to that now before us.

LETTER IV.

After a delay of a few hours we landed at Alexandria. It was mid-day; the heat was excessive, and there were few passengers in the streets. We were quickly doomed to feel what might well be termed the succession of the Egyptian plague; swarms of flies were perpetually fastening on our faces and eyes, so that we could scarcely find our way, and were obliged to keep our handkerchiefs perpetually waving. When we entered a coffee-house, our sherbet or lemonade was instantly covered by a dark mass of insects, if we happened to leave up the tin cover with which the drinking-vessels are always provided to guard against this invasion. We went to an okkal, and ordered some dinner: the apartment was filled with a variety of people of different costumes: a Turk felt disposed to entertain them with a song—he put his two fore-fingers behind his ears, and

bending forward as he sat cross-legged, ejected such hideous nasal sounds, intended to be pathetic, that we were obliged to take refuge in a small room upstairs. Here they soon brought us a dish of kid, deliciously dressed, and a dessert of fruit, which, with some excellent coffee, made a superb repast after the starvation on board ship. We hired apartments in a private house, and took possession of them the same evening; but the musquitoes were dreadfully annoying — it was almost useless to close your eyes, for you were quickly awaked by half-a-dozen keen bites on different parts of the body; but the face was the favourite part, which next morning looked any thing but pale or fair.

The following day, having hired a couple of donkeys, the universal mode of conveyance in this country, and an Egyptian guide, I rode to Pompey's Pillar. It is Corinthian; the shaft is about ninety feet high, and the base about five; it is formed of three pieces of red granite, and stands on a small eminence. It may be seen from a great distance around. The Needle of Cleopatra, not far off, is near seventy feet in height, and formed of an entire piece of the same stone, covered with hieroglyphics, some of which are nearly effaced. The

guide who attended me was a handsome elderly Egyptian, of a tall figure, and white beard; and was dressed in a long blue cloak, which left his bust and arms naked: he walked and ran beside our noble coursers in the intense heat of the day. Vast and shapeless heaps of ruins are all that remains of ancient Alexandria, and one cannot well imagine a residence more mournful and heart-oppressing than the modern city. Tracts of sand spread on every side, varied here and there by a spot of verdure, or a group of palms. There is not one object of interest, or a single pleasant walk, in the flat and monotonous region around. The Convent of Mahmoudich and the English Consul's garden, are the only exceptions. The houses of the city, at least the European part, are in general lofty, and plastered white. Those of the merchants are handsomely furnished, and well adapted to the climate, which is the coolest in Egypt, a fine breeze from the sea setting in regularly every day. There are several coffee-houses kept by Franks here, of which the principal one was the only tolerable place of resort—where are met the merchants, adventurers, and natives of different countries. The fortifications erected by Mahmoud Ali, the Pacha of Egypt, around this city, are extensive and strong.

This prince is admirably fitted to rise to eminence in the Turkish empire. Of Greek extraction, possessed of great talents, a wily politician, yet daring and bloody in the execution of his plans,—as was proved in the massacre of the three hundred Mameluke Beys, whom he invited to a banquet,—the time will soon come when he will throw off his dependence on the Porte, and erect Egypt into a sovereignty. He is very fond of Europeans, and has engaged a great many in his service; and being perfectly free from bigotry to the faith of the Prophet, he never requires them to change their religion. He is ardently desirous to improve his country, and has established a sugar-manufactory on the Nile, and several of cotton in Cairo. He longed for the luxury of eating ice: and there being no such thing in Egypt, Mr. Salt, the British Consul-general, sent to England for an apparatus for making it. The machine was conveyed, on its arrival, to the Pacha's palace, and the Nile water made use of for the purpose. Mahmoud Ali hung over the whole operation with intense curiosity, and when, after several disappointments, a large piece of real ice was produced, he took it eagerly in his hand, and danced round the room for joy like a child, and then ran into the harem to shew it to his

wives and mistresses; and ever since he luxuriates upon it. The great canal of Cleopatra, which he has lately made, or rather revived, forty miles in length, connecting the Nile with the sea at Alexandria, is an extraordinary work: for a considerable time he employed a hundred and fifty thousand men about it, chiefly Arabs of Upper Egypt; of these, twenty thousand died during the progress of the work. Having ridden out early one morning in the neighbourhood of the city, and entered an elegant house which Ali was building for his son, we suddenly heard the sounds of music from without, and perceived it was the Pachá himself, with his guard, who had just arrived from Cairo. He was on foot, and stood on the lofty bank of a new canal he was making, earnestly observing the innumerable workmen beneath. He was of middle stature, and plainly dressed; his age appeared between fifty and sixty; his features were good, and had a calm and thoughtful character; and his long grey beard fell over his breast. The bed of the canal below presented a novel spectacle, being filled with vast numbers of Arabs of various colours, toiling in the intense heat of the day, while their Egyptian taskmasters, with whips in their hands, watched the progress of their labour. It

was a just and lively representation of the children of Israel forced to toil by their oppressive masters of old. The wages Mahmoud allowed these unfortunate people, whom he had obliged to quit their homes and families in Upper Egypt to toil about this work, were only a penny a-day, and a ration of bread. Yet such is the buoyancy of spirits of the Arabs, that they go through their heavy toil with gaiety and cheerfulness. By moonlight I took a walk round the spot where they were encamped: they were seated under their rude tents, or lying down in ranks without any covering but the sky, eating their coarse meal of bread; yet nothing was heard all around but the songs of their country, unmelodious enough, mingled with the loud clapping of hands in concert, which is always with them a sign of joy.

The distance to Rosetta from this town is about two or three days' journey. The contrast of scene is delightful on approaching the former place. Situated in the midst of groves of date-trees, and gardens of banana, orange, and lemon-trees, on the banks of the Nile, Rosetta is probably the most desirable residence in Egypt. At present its commerce has much declined, and is inferior to that of Damietta, though few places can be more

monotonous or stupid than the latter town, situated on a perfect flat.

A wedding that took place at Damietta, on the occasion of the marriage of the Consul's daughter, afforded an amusing scene. The Consul, who was a native of the country, invited all the travellers to the ceremony and the feast. The bride was attired in her gaudiest apparel, her hair braided in the most exquisite manner, and her eye-lashes and brows tinged with surmeh. All the relations and a great number of friends were present, and the banquet was profuse and luxurious; the company sitting on cushions ranged against the walls. The dishes, of the Turkish and Grecian cookery, were handed round in succession, with various kinds of wines, and a profusion of sweetmeats and sherbet. At last, when the music was brought, and the lights threw a vivid glare through the room, the company became gay and joyous, and a number of Almeh girls commenced their voluptuous dance to the noise of the tambour and castanets. Many of the guests of both sexes joined in dancing, while others formed in groups to enjoy their chibouque and coffee. The bride and bridegroom stood beside each other, and looked very inanimate and unimpassioned: the former, who was an insipid

good-looking girl, seeming resolved nothing should ruffle her Oriental apathy. After they had retired, the mirth of the company became more vociferous, and was kept up till a late hour. The Consul had a very pretty wife, of whom he was extremely fond, and to whom he behaved with as much and more deference than if he had been a European husband. He never ventured to join her parties unless invited; but this is the Eastern etiquette, the ladies who visit the harem being always sacred from intrusion. He one day introduced to her two English travellers, who were at Damietta: she was reclining on soft cushions, and had on a handsome robe of green, and no turban on her head. She had large black eyes, a languishing look, and a complexion perfectly colourless: in conversation she seemed to be indeed idealess.

Having taken passage on board a vessel of the country for Cairo, we sailed up the canal, the shores of which presented nothing but sand and barrenness to the view. But how delightfully the scene was changed, when, on coming upon deck early the next morning, we perceived the vessel going slowly down the Nile! It was just before sunrise, and the softest hues were spreading all over the horizon. The shores were covered with groves of palm, among which

were numerous villages, while here and there the white thin minaret rose into the air, and a universal stillness reigned throughout the scene. It was impossible to find oneself, for the first time, on this celebrated river, without the liveliest emotion. The boat stopped for some hours at the town of Foua. Having bathed in the river, I walked through the town: though so early, the shops were open, and fruit selling in the streets; more than one good Moslem, who had just risen from his bed, had taken his seat without his door, and with the Koran in his hand, was reading the Prophet's splendid promises, or teaching his child his prayers. Even in this town there were twelve mosques; and the Muezzin, from the top of the minaret, had begun to call to prayers. This cry, in so still a country as Egypt, and heard at the dawn or at night from a distance, has an effect the most beautiful and solemn that can be conceived. The Orientals choose those who have the most powerful and melodious voices for this service. Often on the Nile in Upper Egypt, when the silence of the desert has been around, that cry has come from afar:—"There is but one God —God alone is great and eternal, and Mohammed is his prophet,"—like the voice of an undying being calling from the upper air. The

Nile is, in general, a calm and beautiful river, about a quarter or half a mile wide, frequently less, but during the inundation it often spreads two or three miles in width. Having returned on board, instead of some rice and a piece of buffalo, which I had pictured might be the fare in Egypt, I found a traveller might have his luxuries here as well as in more civilized lands; as my breakfast consisted of new bread, milk warm from the cow, coffee of the East, delicious grapes, and fresh cheese. On board were a number of passengers of various descriptions. Among them was a Janizary above the common rank, on his way to Cairo, where he had a home: he was a little man, well dressed and armed, and amused himself with abusing the Arabs; and having spread his handsome carpet on the deck, and reclined on it, with his pipe, he looked about him like a lord. he had three or four mistresses. On the deck, beneath a canopy, and attended by her black slaves, sat an Egyptian lady: she sometimes allowed a portion of her features to appear, and, though in general shrouded from view, contrived to see very well all that was going on upon deck, as we found by the occasional loud peals of laughter that came from behind the curtain: once or twice she sent us

a present of some sweetmeats. In a small cabin adjoining ours, were two Frenchmen, who laughed and talked as if they were in Paris, took their meals *à la Française*, the *dejéûné à la fourchette* at eleven, and dinner at six, in defiance of Orientalism: there were sundry other passengers of less note. Our progress was rather slow, as the crew appeared indifferent sailors; but nothing could be more lovely than to glide along at night in the calm cloudless monolight: amidst such scenery it was difficult to close one's eyes in sleep. The effect of the moonlight on the eyes in this country is singularly injurious: the natives tell you, as I found they also afterwards did in Arabia, always to cover your eyes when you sleep in the open air. It is rather strange that passage in the Psalms, "the sun shall not strike thee by day, nor the moon by night," should not have been thus illustrated, as the allusion seems direct. The moon here really strikes and affects the sight, when you sleep exposed to it, much more than the sun: a fact, of which I had a very unpleasant proof one night, and took care to guard against afterwards: indeed the sight of a person who should sleep with his face exposed at night, would soon be utterly impaired or destroyed.

On the second day a very distressing circumstance happened. Our Reis, or captain, was a respectable and venerable old man, very devout; and it being past midday, and the vessel crowded with passengers, he was anxious to be as retired as possible at his afternoon prayers, and went into the small boat astern. He had knelt and turned his face to Mecca, and was quite absorbed in his religious exercises, his long white beard and tranquil features, with his position, presenting a meet picture of Oriental devotion, when, in making one of his prostrations, he bowed too low, and losing his balance, plunged headlong into the Nile. The alarm was instantly spread, and "The Reis, the Reis is in the water!" resounded from all parts of the ship. The vessel was going at a rapid rate, and we saw him borne down by the stream for some distance, buffeting with the waves, and uttering feeble cries. Three Arabs, who were good swimmers, plunged overboard, but they were unable to overtake him. The old man's life was quite thrown away: had the ship been backed immediately, he would have been saved; but the confusion on board was so great, that this was neglected. His son, a tall young Egyptian, walked to and fro for some time on the shore opposite to where

his father sunk, uttering loud lamentations, and calling sadly on Ali, the name of the old man.

On the fourth morning I landed with Michelle, and took a long walk by the shore, till we came to an Arab village, with a few date-trees around it. It was built, as all the Egyptian villages are, of unburnt brick; the houses consist only of one story, and the earth-floor is partly covered with rush-mats; and seats of earth, a few feet high, are raised next the wall, and covered with mats as a divan. We succeeded at one of the huts in procuring a bowl of delicious new milk, and some hot unleavened cakes baked on the hearth: Michelle having bought a couple of fowls at another cottage, prepared one for dressing, as it was uncertain what time we should rejoin the ship. One of the Arab women undertook to cook the fowl, and carried it into the sanctuary of her house, which we were not suffered to defile by our presence: the Sultan could not be more watchful of his seraglio than these women, though they could not have a better guard to their honour than by putting one of their own faces at the entrance, for they were excessively plain. These people are of a dark complexion, and imprint their names in Arabic on their wrists; and the women have a similar indelible mark, stained

with a green colour, extending from the mouth to the chin.—At last, having seated ourselves under the shade of a wall, amidst a crowd of Arabs, some naked and some clothed, the fowl made its appearance, swimming like a great frog in a large vessel of hot water, and we had to tear it in pieces with our fingers.—These people are very indolent, are seldom seen at work in the fields; and though the Nile has plenty of fish, they do not care to be at the trouble of catching them.

On the Monday morning we entered Boulac, the port of Grand Cairo. Our effects being put on a camel, and asses being procured, we proceeded a mile and half to the consular house, passing, ere we arrived at the city, through large uninhabited tracts, covered with sand and enormous heaps of rubbish, the ruins of the old city. The day before, we passed near the village where the family and relations of the unfortunate old Reis lived. His son landed there to meet a number of friends who drew near; and when the latter understood the unhappy death of the father, they began to mourn in a loud voice, and for a good while continued to join their tears and wailings, striking their breasts and clasping their hands. The Orientals, on the various occasions I have had of observing

them, express with great force and simplicity the stronger emotions of the soul,—of sorrow, of joy, or of meeting after a long separation. The parting of a Turkish family in Greece, when death hung over every member of it — the meeting of two friendly tribes of Arabs in the desert,—were scenes never to be erased from my remembrance.

Mr. Salt, the Consul-general, who was at Alexandria on our arrival there, having handsomely requested us to make his house our home during our stay at Cairo, we proceeded thither. It is in a very retired situation, the approach being through narrow streets and passages. It was now the month of August; and though the weather was very sultry, I did not in general find the heat oppressive, except when walking out at midday. The purity and charm of the mornings and evenings in this splendid climate are very great: a cloud is scarcely to be seen in the sky; or, when visible, it is of the most transparent whiteness.

In Cairo you seek in vain to realize the magnificent descriptions of the Oriental writers. The immense hills of rubbish on all sides of the city, which have been accumulating for ages, and which are still increased by what is brought out from Cairo daily on the backs of mules,

prove the superior magnitude of the old city. But with regard to the general mass of the buildings, the modern capital is perhaps as splendid as the famous "Masr" of old: the palaces of the caliphs, and some other public buildings might have beautified the latter, but most of the streets of Cairo have an extremely antique appearance, and present in architecture and materials, no doubt, a picture of what it was formerly. In extent it is very inferior to Constantinople, and contains about two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants. But much of the former is taken up with gardens, whereas Cairo is almost destitute of those elegances. The houses are built of brick of a dirty colour, and are more lofty, and the streets are wider, than those of the capital of Turkey. The windows of lattice or framework of wood often project a couple of feet beyond the wall, and admit the view of what is passing without, and are at the same time screened from observation: here the inhabitants love to sit. The interior of the houses, from their construction and the position of the windows, has scarcely any sun,—coolness and shade being studied as much as possible. The streets are unpaved, but hard; and to allay the dust and keep them cool, the inhabitants throw water over them.

Camels, loaded with skins of water, are almost continually driven through them, and the water flows out on the path as they go along. A traveller is soon convinced that the Orientals judge rightly in building their capitals with such narrow streets; it is quite a luxury in this climate to enter one. The height of the houses, and the projection of the upper stories, keep them always cool and shaded, and the burning sun is excluded. This city is chiefly supplied with water from the Nile, in the conveyance of which to the different dwellings a vast number of camels are daily employed. The houses have all terraced roofs, and that of the Consul's commands an extensive view of the city. It is delightful to rise by night, and walk there in the brilliant moonlight, which has the appearance of a tranquil and beautiful day: you can see to read with perfect ease. From thence you can look all around on the terraces of other dwellings, on which numbers of the inhabitants lie buried in sleep. During the greater part of the night you hear no sound in this wide capital, not even the tread of a passing traveller or houseless Arab; nothing disturbs the impressive tranquillity of the hour, which strikes on the imagination. The lonely palm-trees, scattered at intervals around, and rising high above

the houses, are the only objects which break the view.

The habits of life of the Europeans resident at Cairo are very regular: you find individuals of Spain, France, Italy, Germany, &c., many of whom live in good style, and give handsome entertainments occasionally. One cannot find the comforts of an English breakfast at Cairo: a cup of coffee and a piece of bread are ready at an early hour for whoever chooses; at midday comes a luxurious dinner, of foreign cookery, with the wines of Europe and fruits of the East; and seven in the evening introduces supper, — another substantial meal, though rather less profuse than the dinner; and by ten o'clock most of the family retire. This is not the way of living best adapted to the climate, which seems to require only a slight refreshment during the sultry hours, and the solid meal to be reserved till the cool of the day. There is no good market to be found at Cairo; excellent mutton is always to be had, but other meats are difficult to be procured; of wine there is none save what is imported, and this is very dear, and not of good quality. The oranges and bananas of Rosetta, which are brought to Cairo, the fresh figs, pomegranates, almonds, and other nuts, afford an excellent

dessert. A singular luxury in this city, as well as in every other in the East, is the Caimac, or clouted cream, exactly the same as that made in Devonshire and Cornwall, and manufactured in the same manner. It is cried about the streets fresh every morning, and is sold on small plates; and in a place where butter is never seen, it is a rich and welcome substitute.—Many European ladies of different nations reside at Cairo, being married to Frank merchants: some of them are very agreeable women, and appear happy and contented with their situation. It is curious that you meet with women of every civilized land settled in the Eastern cities, save those of England. Scarcely ever will you find one of our own countrywomen living in climates and among customs so different from her own, though most of the English merchants are unmarried from this very reason. The want of the spirit of enterprise, and the over-attachment to their own comforts, are probably the causes which keep our ladies at home, or would make them unhappy abroad. I knew two who were settled in the East, but they were always complaining, and mourning after England.

The 16th of August was the day fixed on for the celebrated cutting of the bank of the Nile;

a time of great rejoicing with the Egyptians, the inundation being now at its height. It is the custom for a vast number of people of different nations to assemble and pass the night near the appointed spot. We resolved to go and mingle among them, not doubting that something highly interesting would occur. We arrived at the place about eight at night, it being distant a few miles from the city: there was firing of cannon, illuminations in *their* way, and exhibitions of fireworks. The shores of the Nile for a long way down from Boulac were covered with groups of people, some seated beneath the large-spreading sycamores, smoking; others gathered around parties of Arabs, who were dancing with infinite gaiety and pleasure, and uttering loud exclamations of joy, affording an amusing contrast to the passionless demeanour and tranquil features of their Moslem oppressors. After some time, we crossed to the opposite shore: the scene was here much more interesting; ranks of people were closely seated on the shelving banks of the Nile, and behind them was a long line of persons selling various articles of fruit and eatables. A little to the left, amidst widely scattered groups of trees, stood several tents, and temporary coffee-houses, canopied over, and lighted with lamps.

Perpetually moving over this scene, which (both shores and river, and groups of palms,) was illumined by the most brilliant moonlight, were seen Albanian soldiers in their national costume, Nubians from the burning clime of farther Egypt, Mamelukes, Arabs, and Turks. At a number of small sheds, each of which had its light, or small fire, you might have meat, fish, &c. ready dressed. We entered one of the coffee-houses, or large tents, to the top of which a row of lamps was suspended; and, the front being open, we could sip the refreshing beverage, and still enjoy the animated spectacle around. Being much fatigued, I wrapped my cloak round me, and slept for a couple of hours upon a rush-mat on the floor, so soundly as to hear nothing of a loud and desperate quarrel between some Arabs and Albanians in the same tent; but there was little cause for uneasiness in any situation, while my faithful Michelle was near; he knew so well the manners of these people, and possessed such perfect presence of mind. The night was wearing fast away, and, leaving the tent, we again joined the various parties in the shade, or on the shore; some feasting and dancing, others buried in sleep. The other side of the beautiful river, which shone like glass, in the splendid light, still

presented a gay appearance; lights moving to and fro amidst the trees, boats pushing off with new comers, and sounds of gaiety, with the firing of musquetry, being still heard.

At last day broke, and soon after the report of a cannon announced that the event so ardently wished for was at hand. We proceeded to the spot, around which immense crowds were rapidly gathering. The high and shelving banks of the canal, into which the Nile was to be admitted, were crowded with spectators. We obtained an excellent situation for observing the ceremony, by fortunately meeting with Osmin, a Scotch renegade, but a highly respectable man, and the confidential servant of Mr. Salt. The Kiaya Bey, the chief minister of the Pacha, soon arrived with his guards, and took his seat on the summit of the opposite bank. A number of Arabs now began to dig down the dyke which confined the Nile, the bosom of which was covered with a number of pleasure-boats, full of people, waiting to sail down the canal through the city. Already the mound was only partly demolished, when the increasing dampness and shaking of the earth induced the workmen to leave off. Several Arabs then plunged into the stream, and, exerting all their strength to push down the re-

maining part, some openings were soon made, and the river broke through with irresistible violence. For some time it was like the rushing of a cataract. According to custom, the Kiaya Bey distributed a good sum of money, throwing it into the bed of the canal below, where a great many men and boys scrambled for it. Several of them had a sort of net, fastened on the top of a pole, to catch the money as it fell. It was an amusing scene, as the water gathered fast round them, to see them struggling and groping amidst the waves for the coin; but the violence of the torrent soon bore them away; and there were some who had lingered to the last, and now sought to save themselves by swimming, still buffeting the waves, and grasping at the money showered down, and diving after it as it disappeared. Unfortunately this sport every year costs a few lives, and one young man was drowned this morning. The different vessels, long ere the fall had subsided, rushed into the canal and entered the city, their decks crowded with all ranks, uttering loud exclamations of joy. The overflowing of the Nile is the richest blessing of Heaven to the Egyptians: as it finds its way gradually into the various parts of the city and neighbourhood, the inhabitants crowd to drink of, and

wash in it, and rejoice in its progress. The vast square, called the Birket, which on our arrival had presented a sad and dreary area, was now turned into a novel and beautiful scene, being covered with an expanse of water, out of the bosom of which arose the fine sycamore-trees. On one side of this square is a palace of the Pacha; on the opposite side is the Coptic quarter:—the palace of the chief of the Mamelukes, of a poor appearance, with some houses, fortifications, and ruins, forms the rest of this square. In walking round the city, and observing so many flat and naked parts, destitute of verdure, and encompassed with piles of ruins, one can hardly conceive how the waters can ever reach them; but every day, after the cutting of the bank, it is interesting to see how silently and irresistibly space after space is changed from a dreary, useless desert, into a smiling bed of water, which brings health and abundance with it. The sounds of joy and festivity, of music and songs, are now heard all over the city, with cries of "Allah, Allah," and thanks to the Divine bounty for so inestimable a blessing.

LETTER V.

Nor far from the city, on the way to the Desert, is the burial-place of the Mamelukes, the most splendid cemetery in Egypt. Here repose the Beys, with their followers, for many generations. The forms of the tombs are various, and often magnificent; over the sepulchres rise domes which are supported by slender marble columns, and some of these are finely carved. The tombs of the Caliphs are distant a mile and a half in another direction from the city, amidst the sand; they are beautiful monuments in the light and elegant style of the Saracenic architecture, and are in a very perfect state of preservation. They are built of fine lime-stone, and are lofty square buildings, with domes and minarets; some of the latter of exquisite workmanship.

One day I met a marriage-procession in the streets, conducting a young Egyptian bride to

her husband. A square canopy of silk was borne along, preceded by several friends and slaves, all women, and three men followed with the tambourines and pipe. Two female relatives, who walked beside the bride, held the canopy over her; she was shrouded from head to foot, so closely and ungracefully, that not the least beauty of figure was discernible, and a thick white veil concealed her features, two holes only being left for her dark eyes to look through. Beneath this coarse exterior the richest dresses are often worn; but all is sacred, both form and feature, and splendid attire, till arrived in the harem of the bridegroom, when the disguise is suddenly thrown off, and his impatient looks are bent painfully or delightfully on his dear unknown. This procession moved at a very slow pace to the sounds of the music, and the lively cries of joy of the women.

Grand Cairo is encompassed by a wall, which is about ten miles in circumference, and of great antiquity. Mount Mokatam stands near the city, of which, and the whole country, it commands a most extensive prospect. This mountain is of a yellow colour, and perfectly barren. Beneath, and in a very elevated position, is the citadel, which is of great extent,

and in many parts very ruinous. This fortress is now more famous for the massacre of the Mameluke Beys, than for any other event. The Mameluke force in Cairo consisted of from five to ten thousand choice troops, commanded by their various Beys. It was a novel and splendid spectacle to a stranger to view the exercises, the rich accoutrements, and capital horsemanship of the Mamelukes, which were exhibited every day in the great square of the city.

The chiefs and Mahmoud were constantly jealous of each other: he longed to curtail or destroy their power, and they dreaded his unprincipled ambition. After this state of affairs had lasted a good while, sometimes in open hostility, sometimes under a hollow friendship, the Pacha professed the most entire and cordial reconciliation, terms of amity were agreed on, and he invited the Beys to a splendid banquet in the citadel. The infatuation of these unfortunate men was singular, in trusting to the protestations of a man whose faithless character they knew so well. It was a beautiful day, and the three hundred chiefs, on their most superb coursers and in their costliest robes, entered the long and winding pass that conducts to the citadel. This pass was

so narrow, as to oblige each horseman to proceed singly; and broken and precipitous rocks rose on each side. The massy gate of entrance to the pass was closed on the last Mameluke, and the long file of chiefs, in their pride and splendour, yet broken by the windings of the defile, proceeded slowly to the gate of the citadel, which was fast shut. From behind the rocks above opened at once a fire of musquetry so close and murderous, that the unhappy chiefs gazed around in despair; they drew their sabres, and as their coursers pranced wildly beneath their wounds, each Bey was heard to utter a wild shriek as he sank on the ground,—and in a short time all was hushed. Mahmoud heard from his apartment in the citadel the tumult and outcries; and never were sounds more welcome to his ear. This massacre completely broke the power of the Mamelukes; on the loss of their chiefs the troops fled from Cairo.

A second piece of treachery of the same kind was afterwards executed by Ibrahim, the Pacha's eldest son: by the most solemn promises he prevailed on these fugitives to descend from a mountain where they had taken refuge in Upper Egpyt, and meet him on the plain.

One of the Mamelukes, an uncommonly handsome young man, afterwards governor of Ramla in Palestine, told us the tale, during our audience of him, of that scene of murder and treachery, when, hemmed in on all sides by Ibrahim's numerous forces, after most of his comrades had fallen, he with a few more cut his way through the Turks, and escaped. The death of the Beys at Cairo, however cruelly achieved, was the only means of confirming the power of Mahmoud, which was continually disturbed by their plots and jealousies.

In one of the streets of this city daily stand a large number of asses for hire: immediately on entering it, you are assailed and hemmed in by the keepers on every side, each recommending his own animal. They are handsome little creatures, of a quite different breed from those of Europe, with elegant saddles and bridles: some are of a pure white or black colour; and they are used by all ranks, and go at a rapid rate. You pay so much by the hour, and the Arab master, with a long stick in his hand, runs behind or beside you. It is amusing enough to gallop in this way through the crowded streets of Cairo, at one time avoiding, by the dexterity of the Arab, a tall camel, or a soldier mounted on a fine charger,

at another jostling foot passengers, or encountering numbers alike mounted with yourself, while the Arab attendant shews infinite dexterity in warding off obstacles, calling out loudly all the time to clear the way.

In the citadel is a celebrated well, which goes by the name of Joseph's Well; it is near three hundred feet deep, and thirty or forty in circumference. The descent to it is by a long winding gallery, and you meet at every turning with men and cattle conveying the water upwards. The water is raised by means of large wheels, which are worked by buffaloes; it must have been a work of prodigious labour to execute, being all cut out, both gallery and well, from the solid rock. The hall of Joseph is also shewn in the citadel, but in a ruinous state,—and supported by several lofty columns of red granite: the granaries of the patriarch, where he deposited the Egyptians' corn, we could not see, as the Pacha had made storehouses of them.

The Consul-general gave me a letter to M. Caviglia, a Frenchman, who had resided some time at the Pyramids, where he was most ardently engaged in prosecuting discoveries. M. C. came to Cairo one day from his desert abode, and invited me warmly to return with him. We

set out soon after two o'clock, the heat being intense. We crossed the Nile to the village of Gizeh. The direct route to the Pyramids is only ten miles; but the inundation made it near twenty, and obliged us to take a very circuitous course; yet it was a most agreeable one, leading at times through woods of palm and date-trees, or over barren and sandy tracts, without a vestige of population. Fatigued with heat and thirst, we came to a few cottages in a palm-wood, and stopped to drink of a fountain of delicious water. In this northern climate no idea can be formed of the exquisite luxury of drinking in Egypt: little appetite for food is felt, but when, after crossing the burning sands, you reach the rich line of woods on the brink of the Nile, and pluck the fresh limes, and, mixing their juice with Egyptian sugar and the soft river-water, drink repeated bowls of lemonade, you feel that every other pleasure of the senses must yield to this. One then perceives the beauty and force of those similes in Scripture, where the sweetest emotions of the heart are compared to the assuaging of thirst in a sultry land.

The Nile, in its overflow, had encompassed many villages and their groups of trees, and was slowly gathering round cottage and grove

and lonely palm. Its fantastic course was beautiful, for its bosom was covered with many green isles of every possible form: here a hamlet seemed floating on the wave, above which hung the foliage and fruit of various trees, the stems being shrouded beneath; there it warred with the Desert, whose hills of sand, rocks, and ruins of temples, looked like so many mournful beacons in the watery waste. We passed several very long causeways, erected over the flat land to preserve a passage amidst the inundation; and the sun set as we entered on the long expanse of soft sand, in the midst of which the Pyramids are built. The red light resting for some time on their enormous sides, produced a fine effect: for a long while we seemed at no great distance from them, but the deception of their size on the flat expanse of the Desert long misled us, and it was dark before we arrived. As we drew near, we heard the loud voice of welcome from the Arabs, who came out of the apartments of the rock on which the Pyramids stand, and surrounded us. We ascended a narrow winding path to a long and low chamber in the rock, that had formerly been a tomb. Here M. Caviglia, his assistant M. Spinette, a German, and myself, sat down on the floor, and supped on some boiled fowl

and Nile water; and, being very much fatigued, they soon left me to my repose. One of the Arabs placed a small light in the wall of this antique abode, and, throwing myself on my hard bed of reeds, I tried to obtain some sleep; yet the novelty of my situation, the thought of being at last on the spot around which imagination had so long been passionately wandering, made it long a stranger to my eyes.

The next morning, at sunrise, we took our coffee at one of the natural windows of this cavern, that looked over the plain. My servant, who had followed the day before with the tent, lost his way, and did not arrive till midnight; and being unable to find either dwelling or inhabitant, he wandered about the Pyramids, shouting and firing his pistols, till at last he lay down in one of the deep holes in the sand, and sheltered himself till sunrise. In the course of the day we visited several of Mons. C.'s excavations; one was a small and beautiful gateway of fine white stone, covered with hieroglyphics, and of so fresh a colour that it seemed but lately erected. Descending about sixty feet, we entered three subterraneous apartments, one of which contained two large coffins, side by side, cut out of the rock; some little idols only were found in them. There was

also a very curious square room, or place of tombs, the walls covered with figures, discovered by Mr. Salt. M. Caviglia is at present engaged in what would be generally considered an almost hopeless undertaking; he believes there is a subterraneous communication between the Pyramids of Gizeh and those of Saccara and the remains of Memphis, the former fifteen miles off, the latter a few miles nearer. He is sanguine of success in his attempts to discover this passage, and has proceeded some hundred yards in his excavation of the sand: there is the work of years before him ere he can effect his object, though it is probable he will make some valuable discoveries by the way. A man must be animated by no slight enthusiasm to live in this place of desolation, deprived of all the joys of civilized life, toiling like a slave with forty or fifty Arabs from daybreak to sunset, amidst rocks, sands, and beneath burning heats. About two or three hundred yards from the great Pyramid is the Sphynx, with the features and breasts of a woman, and the body of an animal; between the paws an altar was formerly held; but the face is much mutilated:—its expression is evidently Nubian. This enormous figure is cut out of the solid rock, and is twenty-five or thirty feet in height, and about sixteen from

the ear to the chin. The dimensions of the body cannot be ascertained, it being almost entirely covered with sand. The highest praise is due to M. Caviglia's indefatigable exertions to clear the sand from the breast and body of the Sphinx. This work employed him and his Arabs during six weeks: the labour was extreme, for the wind, which had set in that direction, blew the sand back again nearly as fast as they removed it: he is now proceeding to uncover the whole of the figure.

Evening now drew on, and the labour of the day being finished, we seated ourselves at a humble repast at the door of the place of tombs. The solitude that spread around was vast, and the stillness unbroken: the Arabs had all retired to their homes in the distant villages: the Santon, who lived in a lofty tomb near by, was the only tenant of the Desert save ourselves, and his orisons were always silent:—in such a situation one hour of life is worth an age at home; it leaves recollections which no change or distance can impair or efface. The next morning I ascended the great Pyramid. The outside is formed of rough stones of a light yellow colour, which form unequal steps all round from the bottom to the summit: these stones or steps are two, three, or four feet high, and the ascent

88358

is rather laborious, but perfectly free from danger, or any serious difficulty. What a boundless and extraordinary prospect opened from the summit! On one side a fearful and melancholy Desert, either level or broken into wild and fantastic hills of sand and rocks; on the other, scenes of the utmost fertility and beauty marked the course of the Nile, that wound its way as far as the eye could reach into Upper Egypt; beneath, amidst the overflow of waters, appeared the numerous hamlets and groves encircled like so many beautiful islets; and far in the distance was seen the smoke of Cairo, and its lofty minarets, with the dreary Mount Mokattam rising above. Who but would linger over such a scene; and, however wide he roam-ed, who would not feel hopeless of ever seeing it equalled!

The height of the great Pyramid is five hundred feet; its base above seven hundred feet long at each square, making a circumference of about three thousand feet; and its summit is twenty-eight feet square. It is perfectly true, as a celebrated traveller has observed, that you feel much disappointed at the first view of the Pyramids: as they stand in the midst of a flat and boundless Desert, and there is no elevation near, with which to contrast them, it is not easy

to be aware of their real magnitude, until, after repeated visits and observations, their vast size fills the mind with astonishment.

On the third night, carrying lights with us, we entered the large Pyramid by a long gradual descent of near a hundred feet in length; and next ascended the long gallery of marble, a hundred and fifty feet in length, and excessively steep, which conducted us to the great chamber. In the roof of this lofty room are stones of granite eighteen feet long: in what manner these masses were conveyed to such a situation it is not easy to conceive; still less for what purpose these immense structures were formed, filled up as the greater part of the interior is with masses of stones and marble. The few chambers hitherto discovered bear no proportion whatever to the vast extent of the interior. So immensely strong is their fabric, and so little do they appear injured by the lapse of more than three thousand years, that one cannot help believing, when gazing at them, that their duration can end only with that of the world.

The celebrated sarcophagus which Dr. C. fancifully supposed to have contained the bones of Joseph, stands in the great chamber; it has been much injured by the various pieces struck off. The Pyramid of Cephrenes, the passage

into which Mr. Belzoni has opened, stands near that of Cheops, but cannot be ascended.

The Pyramids stand on a bed of rock a hundred and fifty feet above the Desert, and this elevation contributes to their being seen from so great a distance. On one of the days of my stay here the wind blew so violently from morning to night, that the sand was raised, though not in clouds, yet in sufficient quantities to penetrate every thing, and render it difficult to stand against it: my tent, which was pitched in the plain below, was blown down, and I was obliged to take up my abode in the place of tombs. The large chamber excavated in the rock, and inhabited by Belzoni during his residence of six months here, is close to the Pyramid of Cephrenes; it is very commodious and lofty, though excessively warm. On entering the door, the only place through which the light is admitted, an immense number of bats rushed out against us. All the ruinous apartments and temples in this country are peopled with these animals, which Belzoni contrived to get rid of by lighting large fires, the smoke of which soon expelled them. We paid a visit one evening to the Arab Santon, or dervise, who lived in a handsome and spacious chamber, that was formerly perhaps a tomb,

excavated out of the rock, not far from the great Pyramid. He was an elderly man, of a mild and handsome countenance, and black beard. His wild and singular retreat was divided into two rooms; he was seated cross-legged in the outer one, and appeared engaged in meditation: but he instantly rose and requested us to allow him to make some coffee for us. Coffee made by a holy Santon, in a tomb that might have held the remains of kings, and close to the Pyramids! I shall never be offered such a privilege again in this state of mortality. What a pity that the Prophet never tasted coffee: a Turk may well regret this, as it undoubtedly would have had a place among the enjoyments in paradise for the faithful; for on earth, in sorrow and in joy, alone or in society, it appears their enduring luxury and consolation. The holy man seemed to have few enjoyments for the senses about him, yet he looked any thing but emaciated, and his dark eye was very expressive; and as we did not give him credit for being much of an antiquary, it was difficult to conceive why he should have wandered to this solitude. He must have been sincere in his religion, as there was no population among which he could practise the arts and hypocrisy of the dervish tribe. The Arabs

of the distant villages visited him occasionally, and brought some bread and vegetables for his subsistence.

Near the Pyramids is a small and singular group of trees, called the Sacred Trees by the Arabs, not one of whom will ever dare to pluck a leaf of them: they consist of two sycamores and two or three palms, and stand alone in the waste of sand; the leaves are not withered, but have a vivid green colour, and afford a most agreeable relief to the eye.

The last evening passed here was a very lovely one: I was seated with Caviglia near the door of his rocky abode, as the sun was going slowly down over the extensive scene before us, its red rays lingering on the Pyramids, the Desert, and its dreary precipices and wastes. Of all the sunsets I ever beheld, none are so beautiful as those of Egypt: a fierce redness, almost the colour of blood, is often thrown over the horizon, and then fades into the most delicate hues of yellow, green, and azure. About a mile on the right, a small tribe of wandering Bedouins, who had just arrived, had pitched their tents; the camels were standing beside, the fires were lighted, and the Arab masters moving about in their wild and picturesque drapery—the only scene of life in that

vast solitude. We were to set out at daybreak next morning on our return to Cairo; and having taken leave of the Frenchman and his companion, I lay down for the last time on my bed of reeds in the tomb; but every effort to compose myself to sleep was useless:—a thousand agitating thoughts crowded into my mind; scenes of past life returned again, but clothed in dark and distorted colours, and my future journey seemed full of appalling difficulties and perils: the intense heat, and fatigue of the day, with the loneliness of my wild resting-place, and the warm exhalations the walls sent forth, might have caused this. I quitted my gloomy abode, and went into the open air: the desert plains and the wide and gathering waters of the inundation were bright with the most vivid moonlight. How deeply interesting was that walk! The vast forms of the Pyramids rose clear and distinct, and, viewed from the plain of sand as they seemed to rest against the blue midnight sky, their appearance was, in truth, magnificent—those of Saccara might be seen twelve miles distant in the splendid light—and the silence around was so hushed and deep! Pursuing my way over the soft sand, I reached the nearest branch of the overflow; and the night being excessively warm, I bathed once

more in the Nile, a luxury that well supplied the want of sleep.—The next morning we set out for Cairo. After quitting the barren tracts, the ride became very agreeable; the palm-trees were loaded with large clusters of dates. This fruit is manna to the people of Egypt, with whom it is an universal article of food: when ripe, it has a sweet and insipid taste; but when dried and preserved in lumps, after the stones are extracted, it is extremely good.

It is interesting to observe the different ways these people have of irrigating the land. Sometimes a buffalo is made to turn a large wheel which is covered all round with a number of pitchers, into which the water being drawn up from beneath, is poured out again, as the wheel turns round, into a small channel cut in the earth, and this channel conveys it into various others through the fields. Or an Egyptian, half naked, stands all day long in the burning sun on the river's bank at a simple machine of wood, to the ends of which a couple of buckets are suspended; these he incessantly lowers into the stream, and then pours the water into the small canals cut in his ground. The inundation does not extend over the whole of the flat cultivated land, so that it is necessary, by these sluices and irrigations, to distribute the water every-

where. When the inundation has subsided and been absorbed in the earth, a rich black mould is left, which requires little labour. No plough is known here; but, a small furrow being made in the earth by a stick, the grain is dropped in, and the most abundant crop soon starts up, as if by magic. There are two harvests, one in March, the other in October.

In the way we met an Arab funeral: about twenty men, friends of the deceased, advanced under a row of palm-trees, singing in a mournful tone, and bearing the body: they walked two or three abreast, with the priest at their head, and, having forded a stream in front, passed close to us. The corpse was that of a woman, neatly dressed in white, and borne on an open bier, with a small awning of red silk over it.

The market at Cairo, or place where the Circassian women may be purchased, cannot fail to be interesting, though at the same time repulsive to a stranger's feelings. These unfortunate women, as we term them, though it is a doubt if they think themselves so, are bought originally of their parents, who are generally peasants, by the Armenian and other merchants who travel through Georgia and Circassia. Their masters sometimes procure them an education, as far as music and singing go, give

them handsome clothes, and then sell them in private to the rich Turks, or bring them to the market at Cairo, where, however, the business is conducted with tolerable decorum. The lady, veiled and habited as best becomes her figure, and placed in a separate apartment, is attended by the merchant whose property she is, and may be seen by the person who wishes to become a purchaser. The veil is lifted, and the beauty stands exposed. This is better, however, than a Turkish wife, who, on the bridal evening, for the first time perhaps, draws aside the shroud of her charms, and throws herself into her husband's arms,—when he may recoil with horror from his own property, finding the dazzling loveliness he had anticipated changed into a plain, yellow, and faded aspect. But the Georgian style of beauty is rich and joyous, and their dark eyes!—there are no eyes like them in the world. The stranger then casts his sight over the figure, the hand and foot:—a small and delicate hand is, with the Orientals, much valued—even the men are proud of possessing it: he demands the lady's accomplishments; if she sings or is skilled in music,—in this case the price is greatly enhanced: a thousand or fifteen hundred pounds are sometimes given for a very lovely woman so highly gifted.

One day, in company with another traveller, I paid a visit to a rich Jew, one of the first merchants in Cairo. He received us in a handsome apartment, to which a flight of steps ascended. The floor was covered with a rich carpet, and the divan, elevated a couple of feet higher, was lined with soft cushions, and laid out for luxurious enjoyment. A lofty dome of glass lighted the chamber. We reclined on the divan with the master of the house; and a few yards from us was another and more interesting party: six Oriental ladies, all unveiled and richly dressed, were at dinner, and seated in a circle on soft cushions on the floor round a low table about a foot high. The lady of the house, a handsome young woman, was just recovered from her confinement, and this was the first day of her receiving her friends. They ate and conversed much at their ease, and sent us some sweetmeats, and a pleasant drink like sherbet. The husband told us he and his bride were married at the age of fourteen; and they were then six and twenty, and had a houseful of children. Bismillah! blessings to the Prophet! a Turk would have added, with a devout look; but, being a Jew, he invoked nobody, but looked very resigned about it. The ladies having finished their repast, each of them had a Turk-

ish pipe, about five feet long, brought; and putting themselves into an easy posture, with the amber mouth-piece between their lips, and the ball of the pipe resting on the carpet, began to smoke, sip coffee, and chat at intervals. The custom of smoking in the East is very different from that in our country: the tobacco is so very mild and sweet, that it does no injury to the teeth or breath, and it is often used as a luxury by the women; and the tube of fine amber would not disfigure any lips; the attitude, when holding the long chibouque, or flexible argillée, displays to advantage a beautiful arm.

LETTER VI.

HAVING hired a *cangia* for the voyage to Upper Egypt, we left Boulac on a beautiful evening in August. This vessel had very good accommodations—a low room on the deck with several windows, and a smaller one adjoining for my servant; but we preferred in general to take our meals under a canopy without. The crew consisted of seven Arab sailors, and their reis, or captain. For the first two or three days the shores and interior wore a more barren aspect than below Cairo, but the river became gradually wider. On the third day we came to Benesuef; at this town were barracks, with a number of Albanian troops, and it possessed a tolerable bazaar. As we advanced, our progress became increasingly delightful. The vessel generally stopped every morning and evening at some village or hamlet, or where the aspect of the country promised an agree-

able walk, when we went on shore to purchase milk or fruit, and vary the scene a little. In oriental climates a traveller possesses the invaluable advantage of being enabled to calculate with certainty on his progress; the sun by day, and the moon by night, will always light him brilliantly on his way; and he has little disappointment to anticipate from rains, fogs, and clouds; the atmosphere being almost always pure, the most distant objects can be distinctly seen. One evening, having walked some distance to an Arab village, in a grove of palms, we seated ourselves on the trunk of a tree as the daylight faded, when the Turkish commandant came up and politely invited us to take coffee with him. He conducted us to the top of a verdant bank, where a carpet was quickly spread at the door of his dwelling, sherbet was brought, and the time passed away very agreeably. He pressed us to dine with him the next day in the Eastern style, but this would have occasioned too long a delay. It was rather singular, that this officer would not suffer his servant to accept any present; but seeing us resolved to depart, he accompanied us a good part of the way on board, and then took a kind and obliging leave.

We next came to the town of Miniet, not so large as Benesuef; a Turk, of a respectable appearance, requested a passage as far as Siout, which we gave him. Late in the evening the cangia came to near the house of Mr. Brine. This gentleman who is a native of Devonshire, and has its broad provincial dialect, manages a sugar-manufactory for the Pacha; he is very hospitable, and the English traveller is sure to meet a cordial reception at his house, which has an aspect half Egyptian, half English; the garden is laid out very prettily in the latter style. Next morning early we took coffee, and then proceeded to visit the premises, where between one and two hundred Arabs are constantly employed at very low wages; but Mr. B. declared it was often impossible to make these Africans work without blows, though he greatly disliked having recourse to violent measures. Indulgence and kindness towards these people do indeed appear quite misplaced: they are certain to abuse them; and, so rooted in the mind of almost every African is the love of ease and indolence, that they would rather subsist on the merest necessaries of life, than procure comforts by greater activity. We sat down to an early and pro-

fuse dinner at Mr. B.'s, and had the pleasure of partaking of what was rather rare on the banks of the Nile, a bottle of Champagne; and on returning on board we found two goats and a quantity of fowls sent as a present. This gentleman lives here on the fat of the land, and is absolute sovereign over all around him; but the uncertainty of earthly joys seemed to be felt in Egypt as at home, for on our return two months afterwards from Nubia, Mr. B. was dead, his companion, an Italian lady, was cast on the stream without a protector, the assistants and servants were turned off, and the whole establishment put under Turkish management.

Leaving Radamouni, we arrived next day at Monfalut, an ancient town from the appearance of the wall that encirled it. Here was a very good bazaar, and, as usual, a number of Albanian troops. These men, remarkable for their fine and healthy appearance in their own country, seem to languish beneath this sultry climate, and become sallow and faded. Here we had an opportunity of witnessing the celebrated dance of the Almék girls, who abound in the towns in Upper Egypt, and are devoted to this profession from childhood by their pa-

rents, and dress in a gaudy and fantastic manner. They wear long rows of gold coins on each side of the head, which are attached to the tresses of the hair by means of a hole bored in the middle of the coin. They are often beautifully formed, but the features are in general plain, and a young woman of five-and-twenty always appears forty. They danced, five or six in number, to the sound of the tambour and guitar, and their gestures were as voluptuous as can possibly be conceived; for in the manner and variety of these the whole skill of the dance appeared to consist: altogether it was a very disgusting exhibition.

Siout, the capital of the province, lying a few miles inland, we hired asses next day in order to visit it. Its appearance at a small distance was very pleasing, the branches of the Nile flowing close to it, and just beyond the rocky range of Libyan hills.

We next came to Girgé, a good Egyptian town, of the same sad and gloomy aspect as all the rest: the dwellings of the poor, dark and wretched; those of the better sort, like fortresses, with small and close windows of woodwork, and walls of a dirty brick colour; and the streets, if narrow passages can be so called, always unpaved. A Greek doctor came on

board here, and introduced himself, as he wanted a passage for a short distance. He had come from Ibrahim the young Pacha's army at Sennaar, to procure a supply of spirits and some other articles, and was now about to return. He was a true Greek, of a round supple form, and keen and cunning dark eyes, that could express all things to all men; and though the scorching deserts of Sennaar were not quite so sightly a home as his own Attica, he seemed very much at ease, and willing to take things as they came: he was quite a man of the world, and of very courteous manners. How he could satisfy his Christian conscience to remain with an army of infidels, whose only employment at Sennaar was to drive out and butcher the harmless inhabitants, is not easy to understand; but a Hakin, or Frank doctor, is held in peculiar honour by the faithful, whom it is very easy for him to remove to Paradise at any time; for medicine in any form or way they are always ready to gulp down, though in perfect health. The Greek accompanied me to visit some of the mosques in the town. It was the first day of the second bairam, and all the Turks and Egyptians were taking each other by the hand in the streets, and, having mutually kissed the cheek as brethren in the

faith, they placed the right hand on the breast with an air of the utmost kindness and pleasure —and expressed their joy at the arrival of this happy day. It was a universal holiday: the Arabs, like boys released from school, formed in large groups in the open spaces, and danced and sang with all their might.

We next visited the Coptic convent, a lofty and gloomy building of brick, with only one father in it. He was a man about forty, of a mild and handsome countenance and amiable manners, and appeared sincerely pious; he was unmarried, and no being but himself residing in this large and silent convent, his life must have been rather lone and desolate. He had a little garden of plants on the terraced roof of his house, the care of which seemed to be his chief delight, and he was supported by the contributions of his people, who were about three hundred in number. Had the Prophet forbidden his ministers to marry, he would have lacked imauns, santons, and dervishes, and might have propagated his faith by fire and sword, but never by the word of man; for not the certainty of Paradise would ever induce a believer to live a life of celibacy.

The banks of the Nile on the opposite shore were here formed of precipices of immense

height, which descended almost perpendicularly into the water. The next day, our companion, the Greek-doctor, left us, and proceeded to Furshout; and in the evening we reached the town of Kenéh, where excellent limes and melons were in abundance. The price of provisions in this country is extremely low—eggs twenty for a penny, a fowl for three-pence, and bread and vegetables cost a mere trifle. The thermometer was here at 93 in the shade, but in a few days it rose to 100. At this town we met with an amusing Turkish barber. This class of men are more respectable in the East than with us, which may partly account for their frequent introduction among the characters in the Arabian Nights. He was a clever man, and seemed to know the world well; his features were handsome, and, besides being well-dressed, he wore a formidable pair of pistols in his sash. He belonged to a peculiar order of dervishes, who allowed their hair to grow. Outwardly he looked as shorn as the rest of the faithful, but, on taking off his turban, his long and luxuriant raven tresses fell on his shoulders and breast: he seemed to sneer at many parts of his Prophet's revelations, and said he believed that people of all religions would have an equal chance of going to Hea-

ven. This sceptical dervish was a jovial fellow, and loved an inspiring glass, even with giaours; he wore several dashing rings, and took snuff with all the grace of a Frenchman. On our return from Upper Egypt some time afterwards, the cangia had not long touched the shore, when we saw the portly figure of our friend the dervish advancing over the sand; he carried a handsome walking-stick, and hailed our arrival very cordially.

We set out in the afternoon to visit the Temple of Tentyra, about two miles from the opposite shore; it is situated at the end of a very fine plain, on which is here and there scattered a lonely group of palms. This beautiful temple is in a higher state of preservation than almost any other in Egypt: it is the first a traveller visits, and its extreme grandeur and elegance excite surprise and admiration beyond what is felt amidst any other ruin. The portico consists of twenty-four columns of fine white stone, each twenty-three feet in circumference. Marble is rarely to be found in the Egyptian edifices, the materials of which they are composed being generally a fine white or light yellow stone, or coarse granite. But it is on the porticoes of the temples that the exquisite skill of the architect, and the richest ornaments, have

been chiefly bestowed. The ceiling is divided into several compartments, among the innumerable figures of which (objects of Egyptian worship) are the sacred vulture, serpents, processions of boats, whose passengers have hawks, rams, or lions' heads, with head-dresses. The first chamber you enter is lofty, and supported by six pillars of the same kind as those of the portico. The beautiful zodiac on the ceiling of one of the inner apartments has been taken off entirely by the French, and carried to Paris. The outer wall of the temple is seven feet in thickness, and secured by fastenings of iron; and the stones which compose the architrave of the portico are more than eighteen feet in length.

The hieroglyphics on the ceiling are painted with various colours, which still partially remain; the signs of the zodiac are here the prevailing ornament. You pass afterwards into an inner apartment, supported by rows of pillars, and at the end of this is the door of the sanctuary, over which is the device seen in every temple—that of outspread wings, or plumes, and rays of light descending; as of the glory of Divinity. Having lighted a torch, you pass from the sanctuary through several chambers and

passages of the interior of the temple; the walls covered with hieroglyphics of the most exquisite workmanship, half the human size, and cut two or three inches in prominence from the walls. But the body of the temple is partly buried in the earth. In the grand portico a great deal of rubbish remains, the lower part of many of the pillars being covered, probably, to the depth of several yards. It was a glorious site for a temple: the wide plain in front, which is now covered with a rank and luxuriant verdure; close behind, the eternal barriers of the Libyan mountains; the Nile a mile and a half on the right; and the boundless desert on the left. The traveller in this country is often struck with the magnificence of the situations the Egyptians chose for their temples.

Near the temple is a small building of a pyramidal form, which appears to have been a place of burial: you stoop to enter the low and narrow door, and the light is admitted through a small rude dome at top; many corpses must have rested here, for it still retained a death-like smell. About a hundred yards to the left of the great temple are the remains of a smaller one; the figures cut in the walls here exceed those of the former; the foliage of the

capitals being carved with exquisite beauty. The figure of the evil genius, Typhon, ugly and deformed, is carved on each of the pillars.

The inundation of the Nile had this year fallen much below its usual limits; most anxiously did the poor Egyptians watch the rise of the waters, inch after inch, till they came to a full stand. Twenty-five years ago a similar event happened, in a greater deficiency than the present, which was productive of great distress, owing to the scarcity of the crops. They fear for their harvests now, and the peasants labour with daily and nightly toil to make amends for the deficient overflow, by raising the water by every possible device, to pour it on their lands. As we advance higher into the country, the surface of the stream is often several inches below the level of the shore. This evening a group of Arab boys came to the river-side, and kept up a sort of singing in chorus for some time, which was more melodious than most of their efforts of this kind; then a man mounted on horseback, and dressed fantastically to personate a fool, advanced, attended by a number of Arabs on foot, whom he diverted by a variety of ludicrous gestures. This procession paraded about for some time, with much shout-

ing and clapping of hands; and was, we understood, an ancient custom, to propitiate the waters of the Nile, that they might rise to their usual level.

The town of Kenéh is the most commercial in Upper Egypt. Numerous caravans arrive here from the Red Séa, by way of Cossair, and bring Mocha coffee, the shawls and spices of India, and various other articles; and carry back corn, sugar, honey, and oil. The bazaars are not so good as in many of the other towns; but the market for meat is every where indifferent. A butcher who is about to cut up a sheep is quickly surrounded by customers, who direct him to separate the part of the animal they like, and in a short time it all disappears. —The women of pleasure of various nations and colours, are met with in every street, in this place, and are adorned with strings of gold coins on each side the face, rings in their noses, or heavy bracelets on their wrists, each after her own taste. At evening we frequently heard the sounds of music and dancing from the houses where they were assembled with the Albanian soldiers or the merchants. Two or three times several of them came to the river-side, and set up a sort of song or dirge,

with clapping of hands, the effect of which was not likely to entice any hapless traveller ashore.

We left Kenéh with a fair breeze about nine o'clock at night, and were becalmed the greatest part of next day near a pleasant village, luxuriantly shaded. In the middle of most of the villages, there are generally one or more large spreading trees, mostly sycamores, which afford a shade sufficient for a number of people; beneath these the Arabs love to sit, passing their hours indolently away with conversation and the everlasting pipe. The soil beneath is often nothing but a mass of thick dust or light earth, without any verdure; here they sit and recline with great content, when a little exertion of watering might procure a green and verdant couch. The patriarchs of the village, with their long beards, were all enjoying themselves in the shade of some beautiful trees at the river's side. There was not a breath of wind, and the heat was too powerful for our Arab sailors to walk on the beach, and pull the cangia along by a rope, which is the common practice in a calm. We resolved, however, to go and see what is supposed to be the site of Coptos, where some widely scattered ruins are still to be seen; and having hired a boat, we crossed

over, as it was a few miles walk from the opposite shore. Amidst large and confused heaps of rubbish, are some remains of walls, a few feet high, and fragments of pillars of fine granite. On our return, we passed through a village on the declivity of a hill, and stepped into its large mosque. The hour of evening prayers was just begun; and the peasants of the neighbourhood, many of them fine-looking men, others venerable with age, were gathering fast to their devotions. The corridor was supported by lofty pillars, among which were two or three fine ones of granite, which they had actually taken in pieces from the ruins of Coptos to support their house of faith. In a small building adjoining were several small reservoirs of water, cool and shaded, where the believers were carefully and devoutly washing their feet before they entered the mosque." In this climate their manner of worshipping has often a very impressive as well as picturesque effect. Just after sunset, when the last and loveliest hues are cast over the silent Egyptian scenery, or more often when the moon has spread her brilliant light on the river and shore, the Turks and Arabs come to the water's edge; and, heedless of the traveller beside them, spread their cloak on the bank, and turning

their face to Mecca, and alternately kneeling and standing, are for some time entirely absorbed in their devotions, apparently actuated by a deep and solemn sense of the duty they are engaged in.

At the village of Koft a funeral passed by as we stood near the mosque; the burial-ground was on the side of a hill, shaded by palms, and commanded an extensive view of the surrounding country. The tombs were all of one form, low, a few feet in length, and plastered white. There was no outcry on this occasion, or funeral wail, as it was a child who had died; when an Arab had partly covered the corpse, each of the relatives pushed the earth gently with his hands into the grave, continually repeating some Arab words, signifying "Be thou happy."

Although there is a sameness in the character of the Egyptian scenery, it is such as is to be seen in no other land. The Libyan and Arabian chains of mountains, perfectly naked, stretch on each side of the Nile nearly to the first cataract, generally within a few miles of the river, and sometimes close to it, or forming its bank. At the foot of these naked masses of a light colour, often appear groups of the most vivid and beautiful verdure, the palm and sycamore spreading over some lonely cottage, a

herd of goats and buffaloes winding their way, or a camel silently grazing. The utter barrenness and desolation that often encompass scenes and spots of exquisite fruitfulness and beauty, the tomb of the santon with its scanty shade, and the white minaret with its palm and cypress placed on the very verge of a boundless desert, or amidst a burning expanse of sand, are almost peculiar to Egypt. Then you often pass from the rich banks of the Nile, covered with lime and orange-trees, where groups of Orientals are seated luxuriously in the shade, into a wild and howling waste, where all, even the broken monuments of past ages, only inspires feelings of sadness and regret.

It was evening ere we arrived at Luxor, a poor yet populous village, erected partly amidst the ruins of the great temple. This edifice is near the water's edge, and its lofty yellow pillars, each thirty feet in circumference, and ranged in long colonnades, instantly arrest the attention. On landing, we found on the sand a dozen grim Egyptian statues, large as life, cut in coarse granite, after the fashion of the great Memnon, and in a sitting posture, close to the edge of the water, that rippled at their feet. The weight of each statue was enormous, and would render the removal difficult; or else a

traveller might well be tempted to ship one of them, as they seemed to be no man's property. There are two most beautiful obelisks fronting the gateway, seventy feet high, but in reality much loftier, as a considerable part is buried in rubbish. Their hieroglyphics are cut deeper, and with greater delicacy, than those on any other obelisks in Egypt. A Frenchman, in the employment of Drouetti the consul, resided here, who shewed us much politeness; he was an intelligent man, dressed in the Arab costume, and had resided sixteen years in various parts of this country. His companion, Moris Bonnet, had gone to Cairo for a supply of wine and other comforts, and he felt solitary and impatient for his return: he possessed a small collection of minerals and other curiosities, and had manufactured a cool delightful sort of palm-wine out of the juice of the tree, which was very grateful to us in the sultry heat of the day. Sixteen years' residence in Upper Egypt is really a trial of a man's patience and enthusiasm, and above all beings for two Frenchmen. Suleiman Aga, commander of the Pacha's Mamelukes at Esneh, a town two days' sail farther, was not so resigned: this man was one of Bonaparte's colonels, and on the ruin of his master's fortunes came to Egypt, and offered

his services to the Pacha, protesting at the same time he would never consent to change his religion. Mahmoud laughed, and said, he cared nothing about his religion, if he only served him well; but he must allow himself to be called by a Turkish name, and wear the costume. Suleiman Aga now lives in style as commandant at Esneh, and receives travellers very hospitably; but his soul pines, amidst Egyptian beauty, for a suitable companion, and he implored a fellow-traveller and friend of mine to send him out an English or Italian wife; he swore he would pay implicit deference to his friend's advice, and marry the lady the moment she arrived. The women around him, he said, were so insipid; and he should live there contented could he be but blessed with one whom he could converse with, and whose vivacity and intelligence would brighten his solitary hours.

It is difficult to describe the noble and stupendous ruins of Thebes. Beyond all others they give you the idea of a ruined, yet imperishable city; so vast is their extent, that you wander a long time confused and perplexed, and discover at every step some new object of interest. From the temple of Luxor to that of

Karnac the distance is a mile and a half, and they were formerly connected by a long avenue of sphynxes, the mutilated remains of which, the heads being broken off the greater part, still line the whole path. Arrived at the end of this avenue, you come to a lofty gateway of granite, and quite isolated. About fifty yards farther you enter a temple of inferior dimensions, which Drouetti has been busy in excavating; you then advance into a spacious area, strewed with broken pillars, and surrounded with vast and lofty masses of ruins,—all parts of the great temple: a little on your right is the magnificent portico of Karnac, the vivid remembrance of which will never leave him who has once gazed on it. Its numerous colonnades of pillars, of gigantic form and height, are in excellent preservation, but without ornament; the ceiling and walls of the portico are gone; the ornamented plat-stone still connects one of the rows of pillars with a slender remain of the edifice attached to it. Passing hence, you wander amidst obelisks, porticoes, and statues; the latter without grace or beauty, but of a most colossal kind. If you ascend one of the hills of rubbish, and look around, you see a gateway standing afar, conducting only to solitude,—and detached and roofless pillars, while

others lie broken at their feet, the busts of gigantic statues appearing above the earth, while the rest of the body is yet buried, or the head torn away.

The length of the great temple of Karnac is estimated at 1200 feet, and its breadth at 400; and among its hundred and fifty columns are two rows, each pillar of which is ten feet in diameter. On the left spread the dreary deserts of the Thebais, to the edge of which the city extends. In front is a pointed and barren range of mountains. The Nile flows at the foot of the temple of Luxor; but the ruins extend far on the other side of the river, to the very feet of those formidable precipices, and into the wastes of sand. The natural scenery around Thebes is as fine as can possibly be conceived. The remainder of the statue is still here, the beautiful bust of which Belzoni sent to the British Museum; it was fallen and broken off long since. Drouetti is quite inexcusable in having caused one of the two beautiful obelisks at the entrance of the temple of Karnac to be thrown down and broken, that he might carry off the upper part: such an act is absolute sacrilege.

One cannot help imagining that a vast deal yet remains to be discovered beneath this

world of ruins, on both sides of the river; but the pursuit requires incessant and undivided attention. A traveller must lay his account to spend six months in excavating here, with a body of Arabs, who work very cheaply, and must put up with many privations, before he could expect to be richly compensated for his pains.

The second visit we paid to Karnac was still more interesting. The moon had risen, and we passed through one or two Arab villages in the way, where fires were lighted in the open air, and the men, after the labours of the day, were seated in groups round them, smoking and conversing with great cheerfulness. It is singular that in the most burning climates of the East the inhabitants always love a good fire at night, and a traveller soon catches the habit; yet the air was still very warm. There was no fear of interruption in exploring the ruins, for the Arabs dread to come here after daylight, as they often say these places were built by Afrit, the devil; and the belief in apparitions prevails among most of the Orientals. We again entered with delight the grand portico. It was a night of uncommon beauty, without a breath of wind stirring, and the moonlight fell vividly on some

parts of the colonnades, while others were shaded so as to add to, rather than diminish their grandeur. The obelisks, the statues, the lonely columns on the plain without, threw their long shadows on the mass of ruins around them, and the scene was in truth exquisitely mournful and beautiful.

LETTER VII.

THE next day we crossed to the opposite shore to visit the Memnonium. The hieroglyphics there are all of a warlike character; the columns are plain and without any ornament; the capitals perfectly simple, and bear a greater resemblance to the Doric than to any other order, and are the same as those of Karnac and Luxor. The front of many of the columns is formed into statues of Osiris, near thirty feet high, with the hands folded on the breast; but the features are defaced. Close to Kurnu lie the fragments of an enormous statue. The bust is thirty-five feet in length, the width of the shoulders twenty-five feet, and the whole must have been nearly eighty feet high. It consisted of one solid piece of granite. It has fallen on its face, and the features are quite obliterated; its thickness is prodigious.

About a mile and a half distant are the ruins of Medinet Abou, apparently those of a temple and palace, which are entered by a small and very handsome gateway. The portico of the former conducts to a large square, round the sides of which run lofty corridors; the capitals of the pillars are highly ornamented, and the ceiling they support richly painted. The various bas-reliefs cut on it still preserve their vivid colours, which are most frequently of a light blue and red. The ruined palace is peculiarly fresh and gay, just that of a court, as if time had in pity spared it for its elegance. The length of the temple is near five hundred feet; but the interior is much obscured by rubbish, and its general aspect has none of the grandeur of Luxor and Karnac. Seated on the shores of the Nile, Medinet Abou must once have possessed its cool retreats, its fountains, and woods of perpetual green; but the face of Nature is perfectly desolate now, and though, after the lapse of so many centuries, it is still beautiful within, every sign of vegetation has perished without, and it is completely enveloped in a frightful waste.

We proceeded along the loose sand, and wound up between the hills; the weather was very sultry. The burial-place of ancient

Thebes is situated here, and innumerable graves and vaults are seen scattered over this part of the desert, even to the foot of the precipices. The mummies have been drawn from their tombs with a rapacious and unsparing hand. In this vast cemetery there were no objects such as we expect to see around the remains of the dead, but a waste of bright and scorching sand, amidst black and naked rocks. The corpses of the poor Egyptians had most of them been torn from their deep graves and strong vaults; many of the latter, to which flights of steps led, after being rifled, had their doors secured, till another visit might produce fresh discoveries; others were entirely empty and spoiled. The chief part of this havoc was committed by the Arabs, who tore the bodies open to get at the resin used in the embalming, which they sold at Cairo at a high price; but travellers and *savans*, and their agents, have also had their share in this sacrilege, if so it may be called. It is a sad and disgusting sight; the sands and the edges of the graves in some parts being strewed with the bones and pieces of the flesh of the mummies, thrown wantonly about. The poor Egyptians, who had slept in peace for some thousands of years, have been mercilessly dealt with here, and the

remains of warriors, citizens, and sages, may now lie mingled together beneath the burning sun; for no retreat or sanctuary of the dead has been suffered to remain inviolate. I picked up a foot with part of the leg, that from its smallness and delicacy seemed to have belonged to an Egyptian lady. It had suffered little from time, except being shrunk in size, for the flesh, though quite dried, still adhered to it: but it strongly retained the mummy smell.

Not far from hence, in the plain below, are the two colossal statues of Memnon: one is cut out of a solid block of granite; the other is composed of several pieces. They are in a sitting posture, near sixty feet in height, and can be seen from a great distance round. The architecture is coarse; the posture easy and tranquil, with their gigantic hands placed on their knees. At this time the inundation had gathered round these enormous statues to some extent, and invaded a part of their stone chair or seat: their appearance, thus isolated, was most strange, they seemed to sit like the stern and ancient genii of the plain, over whom time and decay had no power.

The Nile for the last few days had grown narrower, and its banks more wild and rugged; the climate seemed to become more pure

as we advanced. The heat at Esnéh, where we arrived on the second day, was very intense,—indeed it would have been difficult to have borne it, but for the luxury of bathing twice a-day in the Nile, at sunrise and sunset. The ruin of the temple is situated in the middle of the town, and its portico, the most beautiful and best preserved in Egypt, is obscured by a mass of rubbish: it is situated near the market-place. The capitals of the pillars are mostly different from each other, and this variety, as in the portico of Etfu, has a delightful effect: they are taken from the leaves, flowers, and stems of plants and trees, as the vine, the lotus, and the palm-tree.

In the progress towards the cataracts, we observed the colour of the inhabitants of the villages became gradually darker, till at last it became quite black.

At length we reached Etfu, or Apollinopolis Magna. Its temple is a noble ruin of vast extent, and commands a most extensive view of the river and the plains above and below; the piers of the gateway are eighty-five feet in height, and the length of the outer wall of the temple is near four hundred and twenty feet. You enter into an immense area, round which runs a lofty corridor, supported by a single

row of pillars, and at the end is the portico, with three rows of columns: the capitals of the pillars like those of the temple of Esnéh. This great and magnificent temple is in an excellent state of preservation. The villagers have built a number of wretched cottages in the courts and on the roof of the edifice; a multitude of people were at work beneath the corridors, and the noise of their operations resounded through every part of the building. The miserable huts and their squalid inhabitants haunting your sight at every avenue of this splendid ruin, sadly injured its effect. One could not help earnestly wishing that, like Thebes and Tentyra, it stood in some deep and desert solitude, where the foot of man seldom approached.

The next village we came to was sweetly situated in a grove of palms, and its small gardens looked very neat and inviting. Here we met with a Greek, who had wandered to a great distance, and seemed to live by his wits. He had with him a young Abyssinian girl, who had not long left her own country, purchased, no doubt, by this man for himself first, probably, and afterwards for sale. She was seated beneath one of the trees; and was of a dark complexion, but was not pretty, as her countrywomen are so often said to be.

Landing early one morning, we strolled to a Coptic village, and found the people remarkably civil. The old sheik was very importunate with us to enter his dwelling, and partake of a repast; and the chief part of the population crowded round, among whom were a few of the prettiest women we had seen in Egypt. The very early marriages sadly impair their attractions; and, joined with exposure to the burning sun, make them look haggard at thirty. At one place there was a young girl of twelve years of age, married however, and carrying her child in her arms. Such is the force of custom, that even in the most remote situations, where no looks but those of their neighbours are likely to meet them, you see the peasant women come to the Nile for water, with their features rigidly concealed, being all, except the eyes, covered with a thick veil.

The next town we reached was Essouan, around which are scattered the ruins, uninteresting however, of the ancient town of Syené; they stand on the steep banks of the river, in some parts in the form of the ruined turrets of a castle. In the afternoon we crossed to the island of Elephantine. The vivid descriptions given by Denon of this island are a little overcharged. It is a very enchanting spot, about

a mile in length, and near a quarter of a mile broad; the northern part of it is a desert in miniature, all rocks and barrenness, with the fine ruin of a small temple on its most conspicuous point: the rest is covered with gardens, cottages, and groves of palm and fruit trees even to the water's edge. A man who has never toiled through long and burning deserts can have little idea of the rapture with which a group of trees, or a bright spot of verdure, is hailed; or of the deep luxury of feeling excited by again moving among cottages, and fountains, and cool retreats. The land of Palestine was, no doubt, beautiful and rich; but the ecstasy the Israelites felt on beholding and entering it, and the glowing language used in describing it, had their origin as much perhaps in the passage through the dreary and howling wilderness, as in the attractions of the scenes themselves.

The next morning we rode to the Isle of Philœ. The way was through a perfect desert of sand and rocks; the latter piled in huge and lofty masses. About half-way was a fountain of water, covered by a lofty arch of brick from the rays of the sun. Beneath this two poor women were sitting, who offered us water in hope of a trifling reward. A few miles farther

on, we came to the shore, opposite the Isle of Philœ, and, having procured a boat, crossed over. It is a branch of the Nile, which here makes a circuit, as if on purpose to encompass this singular spot. Not half so large as Elephantine, it has no verdure except a few scattered palm-trees at the water's edge, but its rocky and romantic surface is completely covered with superb ruins. They consist of the remains of several temples: one only of which is in a good state of preservation. There are two lofty gateways, and the pillars of one of the corridors have the same capitals as those of Tentyra,—the head of Isis. The family of an Arab inhabited some of the chambers of the temple. He was very savage when he perceived our intention of penetrating into his harem, and drew his long knife, protesting he would revenge the attempt. At every step you tread on some fragment of antiquity; for this celebrated isle must once have been holy ground, and peculiarly devoted to religious retirement. No situation could be better adapted to such a purpose,—encircled by a branch of the Nile, and imprisoned on every side by utter desolation. The desert spreads its wastes and mountains in front; the dark and fantastic cliffs of the adjacent isles and shores look as if rent by some convulsion, and, viewed

through the long colonnades which crown the rocks even to the water's edge, the effect is quite panoramic. Then the loneliness and stillness of every thing around, only interrupted by the distant rush of the cataracts; and a climate perpetually pure, that gives even to the nights a bewitching softness and splendour. Whoever is sick of the world, and would hold communion only with Nature and past ages, let him go and take up his abode at Philœ.

The boat we had hired was rowed by two boys to the adjacent isle, when a native, perfectly black, who turned out to be a complete character, demanded, with an appearance of great anger, to be taken on board. His object was to share in the present usually given, and he afforded us infinite diversion. His features, like those of the rest of his countrymen, were singularly expressive and animated. An aquiline nose; eyes full of lustre, the every look of which expressed his meaning better than words; —his hair was divided into thick tresses, and his frame, full of activity and muscle, had scarcely any flesh; he was quite black. His looks and gestures were a complete pantomime, and he sung a livelier boat-song than we had been used to; for the Arabs have all a monotonous chant, with which they keep time to their oars. On

setting off on our return, we were surrounded by a small host, importuning for a bakshish, or present. The acting of our Bereber friend was admirable. He endeavoured to intimidate some from applying, exerted his voice the loudest, and kept his keen comic face in the foremost rank, though he had received more than any of the others.

The ride to Essouan through the desert was very pleasant, it being near sunset; and to bathe in the Nile afterwards, how exquisite a pleasure! the intense heat being past, the evening air was as balm to the feeling, cool and soft, without being chill. The next day we directed the cangia to remain at Elephantine; the isle afforded a delightful retirement, which was indeed as a home and a shadow in a weary land. How often have I wandered amidst its shades during the burning heat of the day! There was a favourite spot where a group of trees stood near the water's edge, apart from the cottages; on the opposite shore rose a lofty range of sand-hills, and the channel between was broken by some fine rocks, and one little isle covered with verdure, on which stood one or two habitations; on the left were the ruins of the two island temples;—it was delightful to sit for hours here, and see the sun go down on the romantic and beautiful scenery.

The Cataracts, a few miles above Essouan, are very insignificant, the fall over a ledge of rocks, extending nearly the whole breadth of the channel, being but a few inches in height, though the noise may be heard at some distance. This being the termination of our voyage, the next morning we went down with the current at a good rate, and soon reached Esnéh and then Luxor. At the former town there are some hundreds of Mamelukes in the service of the Pacha, to whom they are slaves, being Circassians and others purchased by him when very young. They are still for the most part men in their youth, handsomely dressed, and are commanded by Suleiman Aga, the *quondam* French colonel, by whom they are disciplined in the European manner.

One day, being becalmed near the opposite shore on our return, we landed at the entrance of a little valley, confined by lofty precipices. Advancing up this romantic spot, we came to a small monastery, with its cemetery in the wild. The gate was closed, and, no answer being given to the repeated calls, we entered through one of the windows, and found all its apartments silent and deserted. They must have been so for some time. In the burial-ground were many tomb-stones with inscrip-

tions, in memory of the fathers who had lived and died in this solitude, which seemed not to be intruded on by human footsteps, save when some chance traveller should direct his wayward steps there. A self-denying place it was altogether for this little community of fathers, who might truly say they had nothing to do with the pleasures of the world.

Returning to Thebes, we set out early in the morning on a visit to the Tombs of the Kings, and passing again near the ruins of Kurnu, sought the house of Osmin, an Arab, who keeps the keys. Having waited two hours till he arrived, he soon set before us a couple of fowls, and some cakes of bread, spread on a mat in the open air, as we had a fatiguing walk before us. The path was first across the sand, and then a continual and tedious ascent up the mountains, till it approached the place of the sepulchres. They are situated in a kind of amphitheatre formed by naked and pointed summits of the mountains: in the middle of this is a steep descent or chasm, and at its bottom are the entrances of these abodes of the dead. Descending a flight of steps, the door of the largest tomb was opened, and the passage, by a slight descent, conducted into the various chambers. The surprise and delight

felt at viewing these wonderful cemeteries can hardly be expressed; there is no spectacle in the world, perhaps, like that which they afford. The chambers are fourteen in number, hewn out of the solid rock; and the walls and ceilings are covered with bas-reliefs, in the highest state of perfection, which is owing partly to their having been carefully preserved from injury and from the external air. The painting looks as fresh as if laid on but a few years ago. The figures, finely and deeply cut in the rock, are of various colours, some of a light and deep blue, yellow, or red, with a mixture of white; they are in some parts diminutive; in others, three or four feet in height. These groups of figures represent sometimes the progress of the arts or the productions of agriculture; in one part you see a long religious procession, in another a monarch sitting on his throne, dressed in his splendid attire, and giving audience to his subjects; or a spectacle of death, where a corpse is laid out on the bier attended by mourners: various animals also, as large as life, and a number of serpents, the different hues and folds of the body of which are beautifully executed, in particular one of a large size of the Boa Constrictor. The features of the women in these representations bear a close resem-

blance to those of Modern Egypt; the face oval, the complexion rather dark, the lips full, the expression soft and gentle, and altogether African. In some of the chambers the sculptures on the walls and ceilings are only partially executed, the work being evidently left in an unfinished state. The ambition of a monarch to eternize his memory or preserve his remains untouched never could have chosen a more suitable or more wildly impressive situation.

Leaving Thebes the same night, the next place of any consequence we stopped at was Kenéh, passing by in the way a long encampment of Turkish troops, who were on their march to join Ibrahim Pacha, Ali's eldest son, at Sennaar. There were several renegades attached to the Pacha's army; among others, a young American of some talents and good family, who came to Egypt, turned Mahometan, and got an appointment in the Pacha's army, but was soon disgusted with a campaign in the desert of Sennaar. He quitted the camp in company with a Scotchman, a soldier in the same army, and after a painful journey arrived at Cairo. At the time I knew him there, he had an appointment as a writer in some way under the Pacha with a small salary. He should have made a pilgrimage to Mecca, the

only object almost worth turning Mahometan for. If to indulge in Turkish voluptuousness was his aim, he was not rich enough, for it requires means in Egypt as well as in Europe to live a life of pleasure. But at Cairo he was often in company with a missionary for the conversion of the Jews, and an excellent man, whose discourses made him perceive the folly of Mahometanism, though he had written a treatise in defence of it. He became extremely penitent, was conveyed down the Nile secretly to Alexandria, and on reaching Europe, was received once more into the bosom of Christianity. His companion, the Scotchman, was more unfortunate: he went about the streets of Cairo with little on him except a blanket, and sometimes came to me for relief. "I can make it badly out, Sir," said he to me one day, "among the Turks; I shall turn Christian again."

In the way to Girgé the wind became violent for one or two days, and obliged the vessel to stop. One afternoon, in order to pass the time, I took a walk to a village at some distance, and seating myself beneath a palm, took out a volume of the Arabian Nights to read. After some time two Arabs came up, and sat down beside me. The book was beyond their com-

prehension, save that a figure of a beautiful Eastern princess in the frontispiece interested them wonderfully. One of them, an old fellow with a beard, made the most expressive signs of admiration, while his eyes sparkled with pleasure. They invited me to enter the village; where, being seated on the floor of a cottage, they set dates and milk before me, and a number of women gathered before the door out of curiosity. The custom they have of concealing a good part of their faces is a very laudable one: considering the number of fine-looking men among the Arabs, it is strange there should be such an almost universal plainness among the other sex in Egypt.

A little naked boy came into the hut: he seemed to be a great favourite, being a Marabey; that is, dedicated from his infancy to be a fakir, or Arab priest. The little dog looked very round and fat, and was, I believe, covered over with oil. All at once the sounds of music were heard without, and a strange group made its appearance. A boy carried a flag of red and white, a tall respectable-looking Arab played a tambourine, a young man a long drum, and another a pair of castanets. They all sung in a low voice; and in the midst was a fakir, for whom all the display was made. He was

a very good-looking man, with a full florid face, a black bushy beard, and his thick hair in wild disorder. He moved his head up and down strangely in time to the music, and joined in the chant with the others. He came into the hut where I was, and behaved with great ease and civility; and seemed more a man of the world than a self-denying saint.

The figure of the beautiful woman in the book, which the two Arabs had kissed with earnestness, the fakir seemed to view with dislike, as the Koran forbids a fondness for pictures. The Prophet was right, perhaps, in prohibiting the use of pictures or images to his people; the wretched paintings of the Virgin and the saints, male and female, in the Greek church may have quite as much effect on the imagination, if it can be at all excited by such things, as the vile statues of the Catholics. The only human figure I saw in Greece that was better worth worshipping, if I may be allowed the expression, than half their marvellous calendar, was a young Greek girl at Tripolitza. She was dying—but her figure was symmetry itself. Her father was a priest, and her mother was, as she was well termed, a magnificent woman, of large size, stout, and her features had a noble and imperial charac-

ter,—quite unlike her daughter, who was of the smallest size in which loveliness could well inhabit. The girl was laid in the corridor to breathe the fresh air. She did not speak; but her elegant yet emaciated limbs, but ill concealed by the loose drapery, were moved at times in agony, while a hurried ejaculation escaped her, and her face was buried in the long tresses of her beautiful hair. Never does a woman arrest every feeling so irresistibly as in hopeless sorrow and anguish. If experience among both the unhappy Greeks and Turks could confirm this, it were easy to appeal to it. I have heard the lament of a mother over all her murdered family; of a widow for her husband torn from her arms and slain; the parting of a lady from her son, whose father lay covered with wounds: but in the touching and impassioned expression of grief the Christian must yield to the Ottoman:—the men feel intensely and suffer silently; and the Turkish women—there is the very soul of sorrow there, and of tenderness.

LETTER VIII.

We arrived at the town of Aboutigé early in the morning. A funeral procession of the Arabs took place here: first walked a number of men, three or four abreast, at a slow pace, singing in a mournful voice, with the priest at their head; the corpse was borne after them on the shoulders of six bearers; it was laid on an open bier, completely covered, and followed by a number of women, who uttered loud cries and wailings at intervals, to shew their sorrow.

Having hired a couple of asses, I set out to ride inland to Monfalut, attended by a young Arab of the cangia. After crossing a plain, and a ferry caused by the inundation, and passing by some pretty villages almost buried in groves of palm-trees, in one of which was held an Arab fair, we entered on a waste of sand, with a part of the Libyan chain of mountains close

on the left. The fair displayed a tumultuous assemblage of people, many nearly naked, of both sexes, engaged in buying and selling, with a prodigious noise of tongues. We met great numbers of the peasants bringing their fowls, eggs, and other articles to market. They are heavily oppressed by the Pacha's taxes: even for every date-tree so many paras rent must be paid. Before this prince's reign, and during the first years of it, they were far more happily situated, and lived in comparative plenty: but the troops, they complained, in their frequent passage to the seat of war, plundered them of every thing; and often fancying we came on a similar errand, they hid their poultry and other provisions on our approach.—After riding some time, we approached some lofty walls, surrounding a square inclosure, and being curious to know what it contained, we found a small hamlet of Copts within, consisting of five or six dwellings; one solitary and lofty palm-tree rose in the midst. These poor people conducted us into a rude little building which they called their church; it was imperfectly lighted, and a curtain concealed the entrance into an inner room or sanctuary, out of which they brought, and displayed with no small pride, two wretched

paintings in oil colours of the Virgin and her Son, and another of some venerable saint or apostle. On inquiring if they had any books, three large and ancient ones were produced, much the worse for wear, and written in the Coptic characters. The manners and appearance of this little community, thus secluded in the desert, had much innocence and simplicity. Their retreat was secured by a strong door. The patriarch of the hamlet, a venerable old man, gave us his blessing fervently at parting.

Pursuing our way, the next object we came to deserving notice was a very neat Arab burying-ground in the midst of the sand; the tombs were three or four feet high, and plastered white. The Orientals, to shew that in their concern for the dead they had not forgotten the living, had placed here a small reservoir of water, supplied by a well; it was built over at top, which kept it always cool. Towards evening we saw the minarets of Siout at a distance, a very welcome sight. The guide and owner of the asses was an Egyptian, and Achmed kept pace with them on foot. They were the only property he had in the world! he had lost his two children, and their death had blasted all the poor man's prospects of comfort.

He burst into tears as he told his desolate state with passionate expressions of sorrow.—"They were the only hope of my life,—for whom I toiled," said he; "and now my wife looks cold and discontented on me, and my home is soured with discord:"—and it being sunset, he then repeated his prayers in a loud tone of voice for half an hour as he passed along the desert.

On entering the city, the sudden change of objects, from the deep solitude of the way, to the loud sounds and rapid movements of the various people in the streets, was most striking. Arabs, Turks, Nubians, and Albanians, almost impeded the passage; the bazaar was crowded. My conductor went to the house of Hassan, an Arab, and engaged a rude apartment. A repast in a Turkish town is quickly procured. Dervish, the young sailor of the cangia, went out and quickly brought me a supper of coffee, milk, bread, and roasted meat, all excellent in their kind; the latter consisted of small pieces of mutton well seasoned, and placed on an iron rod, which is turned quickly round over the fire, and in a few minutes they are ready to be served up. It being evening, the Muezzins were calling to prayers from the minarets.

One of the mosques which I looked into was a very pretty one, the floor handsomely carpeted and dimly lighted by a small dome in the middle; for these people imagine that a partial and imperfect light is favourable to religious meditation. When it was dark we returned to the small apartment, where a mat of reed on the floor was my only bed; but Dervish and Achmed slept on the ground without, where the moonlight was so bright as to make it seem like day. Early in the night, I was awakened by the sounds of music and singing in the street close by, where every thing else was perfectly silent: they were extremely sweet, and passed slowly by. Soon after daybreak, the loud voice of Achmed was heard in an exclamation of praise to Allah: we quickly rose, and having breakfasted on coffee and Turkish pancakes, prepared in the streets at this early hour, we proceeded on our way.

Having left the fertile environs of Siout, and entered on a sandy tract, we came in a few hours in sight of a large caravan, that had halted in the desert; it consisted of Arabs from farther Egypt, who were conveying a number of black slaves to Cairo to be sold. The tent of the chief was distinguished by a piece of

blue cloth, suspended from the top; the other tents were pitched around without any order; the camels were turned loose on the sand, and the Arabs were formed into groups, smoking and conversing, while several of the unfortunate blacks were wandering about, or preparing their coarse meals. The chief, thinking, no doubt, I wished to make a purchase, conducted me, with significant gestures and smiles, into a large tent, which was filled with a number of half-naked young black women, doomed to find masters at Cairo.—We soon took leave of the caravan, and on entering again on an inhabited tract, met with a party of villagers, men and women, who were advancing in high glee, and singing; the men seemed preparing for a bout at quarter-staff. Achmed's heart was cheered at the sight, and, forgetting his griefs, he sprang in amongst them, and gave and warded off several blows with his long staff with great agility.—We came after sunset to Monfalut, and rejoined the cangia. Nothing particular occurred till we came to Radamouni, and, having procured asses, rode to the ruins of the Temple of Hermopolis. The portico only remains, and its columns of fine free-stone, unroofed and defenceless, and standing

alone in the midst of a plain, having a striking appearance; they are thirty-three feet round and sixty high. Having spent a pleasant day, we passed over in a boat in the cool of the evening to the other shore of the Nile, to visit the ruins of Antinoé, built by the Emperor Adrian: few of the columns are standing; they are of granite, and of very slender form, being about forty feet high, with Corinthian capitals. Proceeding on our voyage, we landed in order to visit the pyramids of Saccara some miles distant. The great pyramid, here, is more difficult of ascent than that of Gizéh. The only way of ascending it is by climbing up masses and fragments of stone of various sizes, the outside of one corner of the pyramid having fallen from the top to the bottom. The view from the top, though of a rather different character, is quite as sublime and extensive as that beheld from the summit of Gizéh.

The inundation of the Nile had now subsided, and the flat lands of Egypt, before parched and dry, were covered with a wide and beautiful carpet of verdure; the heat was also sensibly diminished, and this season, the end of October, was probably one of the coolest in the year. Land travelling through Upper Egypt is almost impracticable, from the extreme heat of

the weather, during the greater part of the year. The navigation of the Nile is the only advisable way, for on the river the air is always more fresh and cool, and the nights are uniformly delightful and pleasant.

Returning from the pyramids of Saccara, over a path of soft sand, we were parched with thirst, and would have given any thing for a draught of water, when unexpectedly, as if dropped from the clouds, a Dervish approached us, bearing an immense water-melon, which we received as manna from Heaven. He was very tall and robust, with a handsome countenance, and one of the finest-made men ever beheld—a model that a sculptor would have delighted to copy; he had his lonely dwelling and little garden at some distance, and had purposely crossed our way with this melon, knowing he should be well paid for it.

On our return to Cairo, we took up our abode in the house of M. Asselin, a Frenchman, who had accompanied Chateaubriand to the country, and remained there ever since. He was a man of some science, would shut himself up the greatest part of the day in his room, and wore the European dress, with an immense long beard, which made his appearance, when he did come out, very singular. You meet occa-

sionally, in the streets of Cairo, with some French Mamelukes; there are fifty of these men, who have changed their religion, in the service of the Pacha: they are great favourites, and have high pay, for during an insurrection of the Pacha's troops, owing to want of pay, about fourteen years ago, he was exposed to great danger, but these Frenchmen, placing themselves before him in a narrow street, fought with such desperate courage, that they made head against all his assailants and brought him off in safety.

The tomb of the unfortunate Burckhardt is in the Turkish burying-ground, without the city. This incomparable traveller was a most amiable man, and by his long residence among the Arab tribes had acquired the appearance and manners of a Bedouin. The Arabs often speak of Sheik Ibrahim; he was to be met with in the desert mounted on a good Arab horse, meanly dressed, with his lance, and a bag of meal behind him for his food. None of the Europeans, at Cairo, ever knew in what part of the city he resided, though he would come occasionally to their houses, and drink wine and eat ham like an infidel; but he was fearful of being visited by his countrymen in return, lest the Turks should observe their intimacy. The

Pacha was fond of his company, and would sometimes send for and converse with him.

The only places of amusement in Cairo are the coffee-houses, which are generally full; but however numerous the company, as soon as one of the story-tellers begins his tale, there is instant silence. Many of the Arabs display great powers of imagination and memory in these tales, which are admirably suited to amuse an indolent and credulous people.

A Turk, with his long pipe in his hand, will listen for hours to a tale of wonder and enchantment, with deep interest, with exclamations of Allah, and without once interrupting the speaker. This custom, so universally prevalent throughout the East, is useful as well as amusing, for the stories have often an excellent moral; but a tale told in Europe would be a very different thing from one heard in these countries. The wild and rich imagery of the East would hardly suit our colder climes, any more than the often impassioned and graceful action of the narrator, or the introduction of his genii, Afrit and Goule. Many of these men travel over the country, and get an uncertain living by reciting in the villages and towns; but the most esteemed are to be found in the cities. Their tales are either invented by themselves,

or taken from the Arabian Nights and other Oriental writings. A new and good story here, like a new book in Europe, confers fame on the inventor, and becoming popular, passes from one city to another, is quickly learned by the Arabs, and retailed in all the coffee-houses of the land. On the halt of a caravan at evening, when the groups are seated at their tent-doors round the fire, a tale from one of the company is a favourite and never failing source of amusement. You will observe on those occasions men of various nations suspend their converse, and listen intensely to every word that falls from the speaker's lips. The women are debarred this amusement; but there are at Cairo a superior sort of Almeh girls, who are sent for by the ladies, and amuse them with dancing, singing, and music: it was probably a dance of this voluptuous kind that Herodias performed to please Herod and his officers, and it is a favourite throughout the East.

I passed an evening most agreeably with M. Bokty and his family; he is the Swedish *chargé d'affaires*, and is a very clever and well-informed man. It was his beautiful daughter who was shot in the street some years ago, by a drunken Turkish soldier, as she was riding out between her mother and sister; a green veil

which she wore, was supposed to have been the cause of this outrage. The sacred colour of the Prophet is prohibited to the Christians in every way; even a green umbrella would be dangerous to sport here.

The passage of the caravans through Cairo, from the interior of Africa to Mecca, is a very interesting sight, being composed of so many different nations with their various flags and banners. In this city, where it is vain to long for books to beguile the sultry hours, I had the exquisite pleasure of meeting with a copy of "The Pleasures of Hope." How it came there it is not easy to tell, but it was a most welcome and delightful stranger on the banks of the Nile: it accompanied me afterwards through Palestine and Syria; and in the wilderness, and in weary and solitary hours, what better and more inspiring consolation could a wanderer wish for? That little volume has been no small traveller; on leaving Syria I gave it to the daughter of the English consul-general at Beirout, at the foot of Mount Lebanon, where, from the value placed on its contents, it is likely to be inviolably preserved.

A singular amusement is to be seen sometimes in the streets; two men, thinly clothed, and fat as butter, with broad, laughing counte-

nances, circle continually round each other, and every time they meet hit one another severe and dexterous blows on the face, singing all the time some humorous song, accompanied by droll gestures and grimaces: this is much enjoyed by the populace.

One day we rode to the palace of the Pacha at Shoubra: it is pleasantly situated on the banks of the Nile, and one or two of its apartments exhibit all the splendid appendages of Orientalism. The saloon had a very tempting appearance; its rich ottomans and cushions, its fountain and cool recesses, all invited to luxurious repose and enjoyment. The garden was pretty, and laid out in the European manner: in the middle was a charming kiosque shaded by the trees. This prince is a great voluptuary, but temperate in eating and drinking: like most Turks of rank, he avails himself, unlimitedly, of the Prophet's permission of a plurality of wives. We saw the ladies of his harem one day riding out; they were eight in number, but so closely veiled and mantled it was impossible to form any opinion of their countenance or figure. A traveller in the East, who chances to be a physician, is privileged above all men; he obtains admission into the serais, beholds the features of the favourite

beauties, and holds long conversations with them; and it is singular how very anxious and curious the eastern ladies are, to see the Hakim or Frank physician. He comes with a solemn countenance, the very eunuchs look complacent on him, and each lady holds out her beautiful hand, assumes a languishing air, allows him to examine the colour of her eyes, and talks without reserve. Even a trifling knowledge of medicine is of the greatest service; to this we afterwards owed our deliverance from captivity by the Arabs. Even when walking through some parts of Cairo, with Osmin, the renegade Scotsman, who professed to be a bit of a doctor, he was assailed by several women on the subject of their own, or their families' complaints.

The environs of Cairo, since the subsiding of the inundation, are wonderfully improved in beauty, but the only pleasant situation for a residence is at old Cairo, on the banks of the Nile. It is rather a ruinous place; but there are some merchants' houses at the water's edge, amidst a mass of foliage, which look on the isle of Rhoda, and the village of Gizéh on the opposite shore. In riding to this place, you often see in the shade of the large trees near the path, groups of women of a certain description, loose-

ly apparelled, who, having lighted a fire and prepared coffee, allure with their voices and enticing gestures the passenger to join them; but their appearance has few attractions.

One sees at Cairo a good many hadgis or pilgrims from Mecca. These men richly deserve the privileges they acquire, for it is a journey of immense hardship and difficulty. The pilgrimage of the Christians to Jerusalem is mere amusement compared with many of the Moslem's journeys, often from the very heart of Africa: he must cross vast deserts, endure the extremities of thirst and heat, and nothing but an ardent, though misplaced enthusiasm of piety, could possibly sustain his strength of body or mind.

The merchants, who undertake this journey chiefly from the prospect of gain, go prepared with their servants, camels, and a variety of luxuries; but the hosts of poor devoted beings who march on foot, resolved to behold the birth-place of their Prophet, must expect to suffer dreadfully. Many of them, venerable with age, who leave their homes and families to traverse a succession of burning sands, can have little hope of returning again, and the appearance of a caravan on its return is sometimes like that of an army after battle.

There are various warm baths at Cairo, and the Orientals, both men and women, are passionately fond of the use of them. This bath is at first a fearful ordeal for a European to go through. Having stripped, you first enter the vapour bath, where you remain till the perspiration streams out of the pores. You then enter the warm bath, and afterwards are laid at length on a long seat, a few feet high, and scrubbed without mercy, all over, by a Turkish operator, who next cracks every joint in your limbs, the sound of which may be heard through the apartment. You then put on a light dress, and proceed to the outer room, where you recline on carpets and cushions, and have pipes, coffee, and sherbet brought you. A soft and luxurious feeling then spreads itself over your body. Every limb and joint is light and free as air, and after all this pommelling and perspiring, you feel more enjoyment than you ever felt before.

Having resolved to visit Mount Sinai, we engaged camels for the journey. The party consisted of Mr. C. an Englishman, Mr. W. a German, (who was a missionary sent from Cambridge, to labour for the conversion of the Jews,) his servant, a poor stupid German, and

Michel, who proved invaluable to us, together with six Arabs to attend on the eight camels, and serve as guides. It promised to be a journey of great interest, and we waited impatiently for the moment of departure.

LETTER IX.

We left Cairo on the 29th of October, in the afternoon, and after proceeding a few miles from the city, our conductors stopped an hour or two near a small caravan that had halted close to some barren hills. Three of our camels were loaded with skins of water, sacks of charcoal, and an excellent tent. The sensation is singular at first finding yourself on the back of the camel; the situation is sufficiently elevated, and not the most soft or comfortable, and the trot of the animal shakes you almost to a mummy, till you get somewhat accustomed to it. The general rate of travelling is a long walk of three miles an hour, which is the caravan pace. At sunset we went on for about four hours, and then stopped for the night in the midst of the desert. A fire was lighted and supper cooked, but, on putting up the tent, the pole broke, and this obliged us

to sleep in the open air. The tent was repaired at Suez, but we never used it during the whole journey, being generally so fatigued on halting for the night, and exposed to start again at such uncertain hours, that we did not care to be at the trouble of fixing and taking it down.

The next day passed without any thing deserving notice, save that our route, as far as the eye could reach, was utterly barren—a vast plain of sand with little undulation of surface.

The third day we were to set out very early. I chanced to awake before it was light, and perceiving the Arabs seated round a good fire, could not help joining them. This was one of the scenes that one often loves to picture. Jouma, the chief, had just kneaded and placed a flat cake among the embers, and the Arabs were seated in a group around, smoking and sipping coffee, and enjoying themselves highly, for the deserts were to them as a home. There is surely a charm in this wild and wandering life, for one soon grows attached to it. These Arabs were very lively and civil, but a wild race, living among the rocks near Mount Sinai in tents. They always carry their coffee, and a pot to boil it

in, with them; having first roasted it in a small pan, they pound it with a stick; and a bag of flour to make cakes is their sole provision for a journey besides, for they seldom eat any flesh; they each carried a musquet with a matchlock.

There was not the least verdure to be seen till we arrived near Adjerud, a wretched village about four miles from Suez. Here a few scattered trees were visible, but the village was concealed behind a range of rocky hills, at the foot of which we took up our abode for the night. This part of the country was the haunt of robbers, and our guides were very unwilling to halt here; and, fearful lest we might be attacked in the night, they kept watch throughout the whole of it, but all passed off quietly. Mr. W. however, who was conveying a large chest of Bibles to Mount Sinai, was extremely agitated, lest the robbers, on attacking us, should carry away his chest, as in that case all the hopes of his journey would perish; but the Bedouins would probably quite as soon have left it behind.

The next day we arrived at Suez in the forenoon, and having a letter for the Consul for our nation there, who was a Greek, we were received by his son, who spoke some English.

The father, a very fine old man, with a white beard, soon made his appearance. Some cakes and wine, the latter from Jerusalem, were brought, and dinner ordered to be ready in an hour. In the mean time we walked down to the shore of the Red Sea. This can only be called a corner of it, as it is narrow and shallow, and its termination is about three miles above. A range of mountains forms the shore on the right; the opposite coast of Arabia is flat and sandy. Suez is a wretched town, and surrounded by a low wall. The old consul gave us an excellent dinner, and at night we returned to our rude resting-place without the walls: yet this was not without its comforts, for, having procured some delicious fish out of the Red Sea, we formed a circle on the sand, supped in high spirits, and sipped our coffee with greater zest than we should have done in a luxurious drawing-room at home.

Having passed round the termination of the sea the next morning, we bent our course towards the wilderness of Sinai, and came in a few hours to four or five pools of water, called The Fountains of Moses, but at which it is not probable he could ever have been.

The weather continued beautiful, scarcely a

cloud to be seen in the sky, and not a living thing on earth; and this deep solitude and silence, with the uncommon purity of the air, have a strong effect on the imagination. You feel as if you ruled in this vast and inanimate scene, and possess a buoyant and joyous spirit amidst its savage sands and rocks, and feel the truth of a remark of Lord B.'s of a young French renegade, who resided many years in the East, and who said that often when riding alone in a boundless desert, he has felt a delight that was indescribable.

On the morning of the third day our water-skins were exhausted, and we had to push on for five or six hours ere we arrived at the next fountain; it was situated at the edge of the wilderness of Paran. One of the Arabs had gone on before to the spot, and it being by this time very hot, we sprang from our camels, boiled our coffee, and though the water was rather brackish, no breakfast was ever more welcome. The desert now assumed a bolder character. Hitherto it had been a waste of sand, generally hard, and varied with some hills, and high rocks towards the horizon. These were now increased to mountains, which rose also on each side the path, and gave it a fine and romantic character.

Mr. W.'s servant, Franco, afforded us some amusement. He was very artful, and a great glutton, though he persuaded his master he half-starved himself; and when he came to a meal, generally cast on it such a look as the good St. Bruno did on his bread mixed with ashes, when he wept at the thought that man should take such trouble about the body; but when Franco found himself alone, cheese, rice, and coffee disappeared like magic. He had a nose and chin like a hatchet, and settling himself on the camel's back in the position of one of the granite statues of Memnon, used to sing pious German psalms through the Desert half the day long. Towards evening, Franco was generally most melodious, but the tunes were mostly mournful; his voice had a sort of nasal twang, and the rugged German cadence used to strike the Arabs with dismay. It was good sport afterwards to desire Franco to sing in a numerous circle of these people; he had hardly finished three or four stanzas before some laughed, whilst others vehemently desired him to stop, with many expressions of displeasure.

Leaving the valley of Paran, the path led over a rocky wilderness, to render which more gloomy the sky became clouded, and a shower

of rain fell. By moonlight we ascended the hills, and after some hours' progress, rested for the night on the sand. The dews had fallen heavily for some nights, and the clothes that covered us were quite wet in the morning; but as we advanced, the dews ceased. Our mode of life, though irregular, was quite to a wanderer's taste. We sometimes stopped for an hour at mid-day, or more frequently took some bread and a draught of water on the camel's back; but we were repaid for our fatigues, when we halted for the evening, as the sun was sinking in the Desert, and, having taken our supper, strolled amidst the solitudes, or spent the hours in conversation till dark. But the bivouac by night was the most striking. When, arriving fatigued long after dark, the two fires were lighted, I have frequently retired to some distance to gaze at the group of Arabs round theirs; it was so entirely in keeping. They were sipping their coffee and talking with expressive action and infinite vivacity; and as they addressed each other, they often bent over the flame which glanced on their white turbans and drapery and dark countenances, and the camels stood behind, and stretched their long necks over their masters. Having finished our repast, we wrapped ourselves in

our cloaks, and lay down round the fire: and let not that couch be pitied, for it was delightful, as well as romantic, to sink to rest as you looked on that calm and glorious sky, the stars shining with a brilliancy you have no conception of in our climate. Then in the morning we were suddenly summoned to depart, and the camels being loaded, we were soon on the march. Jouma frequently chanted his melancholy Arab song, for at this time we were seldom disposed to converse, and were frequently obliged to throw a blanket over our cloaks, and walk for some hours, to guard against the chillness of the air. The sunsets in Egypt are the finest; but to see a sunrise in its glory, you must be in the Desert,—nothing there obscures or obstructs it. You are travelling on chill and silent, and your looks bent towards the East; a variety of glowing hues appear and die away again, and for some time the sky is blue and clear; when the sun suddenly darts above the horizon, and such a splendour is thrown instantly on the wide expanse of sand and rocks, that if you were a Persian adorer, you would certainly break out like the Imaun from the minaret, in praise and blessing.

The way now became very interesting, and

varied by several narrow deep valleys, where a few stunted palms grew. The next morning we entered a noble desert, lined on each side by lofty mountains of rock, many of them perfectly black, with sharp and ragged summits. In the midst of the plain, which rose with a continual yet gentle ascent, were isolated rocks of various forms and colours, and over its surface were scattered a number of shrubs of a lively green. Through all the route we had met few passengers. One or two little caravans, or a lonely wanderer with his camel, had passed at times and given us the usual salute of "Peace be unto you!" While at Suez, we were fortunate enough to purchase a few pounds of excellent tea, and it now proved of inestimable use to us. It was a good piece of advice of Dr. C. the traveller, to those who visit the East, to provide themselves with this luxury. It is impossible to procure animal food on such a journey. Some rice and bread and coffee constitute your chief subsistence.

We passed this evening a small place of graves at the foot of a high precipice; they were the tombs of Arabs who had died in their journey through this wilderness. They were erected by their companions, and consisted of rude pieces of rock fixed in the sand. A few

of these burial-places are seen scattered amidst these deserts, and they are generally situated in some secluded spot, or beneath the shade and protection of a mountain. Although Mohammedans, the Arabs appear to have very imperfect notions of religion. Our escort was but little given to prayer; and the tribes we afterwards fell in with, got on without it altogether. Mr. W. made many attempts to enlighten the minds of Jouma and his comrades; but Franco was of another stamp; he used to slip aside of an evening and pray very devoutly to the Virgin Mary. Idolater that he was, his master's efforts to convert him to the bosom of Protestantism proved in vain: but it was not till after supper that his mind was given to aspiration.

This night, our place of halting was in a very wild valley, inclosed by naked and precipitous mountains, on whose sides the moonlight fell vividly. In the midst of the glen below, the Arabs and their camels formed an animated group. The dress of these people is picturesque, being of a coarse white colour, and consisting of a turban, a tunic, sash, a shiluah, or loose pantaloon, that reaches just below the knee, like the Highland kilt, and sandals. We sent Jouma and Michel on before to the con-

vent of Sinai, to give notice of our approach. Long before sunrise the following day, we set out, and stopped in a most romantic valley; and the morning being chill, we collected a large quantity of shrubs for fire, and made our breakfast.

The Israelites, during their wanderings of forty years in these deserts, must have lived but insipidly, even with manna and quails, having nothing but water to drink, after a cold night's encampment, or amidst the burning heats of the day. You feel careless what you eat in such a region, but to be debarred coffee, tea, or now and then a little lime-juice, would be misery; without the former, it is certain the Arabs could not endure existence; they are satisfied with a little coarse bread or unleavened cake twice a-day, but coffee is more than manna to them.

A few hours more, and we got sight of the mountains round Sinai. Their appearance was magnificent; when we drew nearer and emerged out of a deep pass, the scenery was infinitely striking, and on the right extended a vast range of mountains as far as the eye could reach, from the vicinity of Sinai down to Tor. They were perfectly bare, but of grand and singular form.

We had hoped to reach the convent by daylight, but the moon had risen some time, when we entered the mouth of a narrow pass, where our conductors advised us to dismount. A gentle yet perpetual ascent led on, mile after mile, up this mournful valley, whose aspect was terrific, yet ever varying. It was not above two hundred yards in width, and the mountains rose to an immense height on each side. The road wound at their feet along the edge of a precipice, and amidst masses of rock that had fallen from above. It was a toilsome path, generally over stones, placed like steps, probably by the Arabs; and the moonlight was of little service to us in this deep valley, as it only rested on the frowning summits above. Where is Mount Sinai? was the inquiry of every one. The Arabs pointed before to Gabel Mousa, the Mount of Moses, as it is called; but we could not distinguish it. Again, and again, point after point was turned, and we saw but the same stern scenery. But what had the softness and beauty of Nature to do here? Mount Sinai required an approach like this, where all seemed to proclaim the land of miracles, and to have been visited by the terrors of the Lord. The scenes, as you gazed around, had an unearthly character, suited to

the sound of the fearful trumpet that was once heard there. We entered at last on the more open valley, about half a mile wide, and drew near this famous mountain. Sinai is not so lofty as some of the mountains around it, and in its form there is nothing graceful or peculiar to distinguish it from others.

Near midnight we reached the Convent of St. Catherine, at the foot of the mountain, and surrounded by a high wall, to guard it against the Arabs. Jouma was lying fast asleep at its foot, wrapped in his cloak, beside the embers of his fire, but he instantly arose and welcomed us. Michel was safely housed in the convent. After calling loudly for some time, a window was opened at the top of the wall, and a rope thrown down; fastening this round the body, and grasping it fast, we were drawn up one after another by the monks, and received in through the window, which was the only place of entrance. Our baggage came up afterwards, and then we were conducted up several flights of steps and passages to our chambers. Michel, who spoke Modern Greek like a native, and who was our only interpreter with these monks, had allotted a room for Mr. C. and myself, and another for Mr. W. and his servant. These apartments are very small, and covered

with a handsome carpet and cushions, with part of the floor raised in the eastern style, and a neat lamp was suspended from the ceiling and already lighted. There was real voluptuousness in all this to our feelings, after the passage through the Desert. After all, happiness is in a great measure derived from the contrast of situations; and is, in this respect, perhaps, not unlike eastern scenery — plains and valleys blooming like Paradise, amidst naked mountains and wilds. No calm, comfortable, luxurious life in England could ever afford those vivid and transporting feelings which were ours during those journeys in the East.

These recluses are of the Greek church, and are about twenty in number, mostly elderly men. The convent was founded by Justinian, fourteen hundred years ago. It is large, and kept remarkably clean. They brought us a frugal supper, and some brandy made out of dates, and we then walked in the corridor without, situated in the loftiest part of the convent. The precipices of Sinai encircled and hung over the convent, and the moonlight now rested on them.

The next morning we heard the voices of the monks at their prayers very early, and they in-

vited us to breakfast with them in the refectory at nine o'clock. This meal is the only one they have during the day; though, if any one is much in want afterwards, he is allowed a little bread and cheese in his own cell about sunset. The breakfast consisted of a small loaf of fine white bread, a dish of pea, or barley-soup, a few radishes, and a small glass of brandy to each person,—for they never eat animal food. The refectory is a long, and very good room, with a large picture of Hell and Paradise at the higher end, that they may not indulge too much in the good things of this world at breakfast. The damned are writhing in all sorts of grotesque postures, and the righteous rejoicing at the very edge of the flames. In a small pulpit near the door stood a monk, who read out of the gospels all the time of the repast, and there were many occasional crossings and cessations of eating among the good fathers at different periods of the lecture. Now the dish of soup was so substantial, that it really required a day's journey through the Desert to get on with it at all; but the spoons of the good fathers never ceased solemnly going, till all was devoured, and the loaf and salad bore company with it. They then rose and turned to the altar, and after sundry gesticulations, we

all adjourned to the corridor without, where coffee was handed round, two cups to each monk.

These fathers are an exceedingly harmless set of men, and in general very ignorant. Many of them had lived here a long time, and, though bent nearly double, bore witness to the uncommon healthiness of the climate; as their cheeks were florid, and their looks cheerful and vigorous.

One is surprised to find here a large and elegant church, with a floor of beautiful marble, and a pulpit profusely adorned with gold. This edifice has three lofty aisles. You pass from one into a small apartment, where, beneath a little niche adorned with filigree work of gold, and lighted dimly by three small lamps, is shewn the spot where once stood the burning bush. Pictures of the Virgin and her Son and many saints were placed round the sides of this singular spot. In a recess in another part of the church is the tomb of St. Catherine, the patroness of the monastery; it is of white marble, emits a most agreeable perfume, and is covered with rich silk, and placed beneath a canopy supported by pillars. The monks confessed it was not the real body of St. Catherine that was inclosed in the tomb, but only an

image of wax, that was a good resemblance of her. The irreparable loss of the body of that excellent lady was occasioned by the villainy of the Catholics, who, burning with envy to see the Greeks in possession of such a treasure, that was sure to work the most astonishing miracles, stole it by night a few days after her death; and having lugged it on their shoulders through the ravines and over the precipices around, had gained the summit of Mount St. Catherine, and were exulting in the idea of its being theirs for ever, when the angels, who beheld all this with infinite interest, descended suddenly and carried the good lady up to Heaven, leaving Catholics filled with rage and mortification.

A part of one of the walls of the church consisted of many exquisite and various sorts of marble, sent as a present from St. Sophia at Constantinople. The great altar is very beautiful, being inlaid, as well as the pillars which support it, with pieces of mother-of-pearl and tortoise-shell.

The superior is a man of very dignified appearance and polite manners, and seems to know the world well: he was very inquisitive about the affairs of Greece, in which he took a deep interest. After breakfast he invited us

to his apartment, where he produced some fruit and a bottle of excellent white wine. He said that in their library, about a century ago, was a curious manuscript that had remained there for ages, till the Grand Signior sent from Constantinople to have it delivered up to him. Mohammed, in his troubles and wanderings, had sometimes found shelter in the convent of Sinai, and out of gratitude had given to the convent an assurance of his and his followers' protection, which being unable to write himself, having dipped his hand in ink, he had stamped it with the impression. It is certain the Monks of Mount Sinai are regarded with peculiar respect by the Turks; and those of other Greek convents, when travelling in different parts of the East, or in hazardous situations, say they belong to the convent of Sinai.

The life led by these recluses is a most dreary and monotonous one; they never dare to venture into the Desert for fear of the Arabs, who bear a deadly hatred to them, and would enjoy as much pleasure in putting them out of the world as they would so many wild beasts. About six years ago these fellows climbed up the precipices that overhang the convent, and, firing down, shot two of the fathers who hap-

pened to be at the door of their apartments. The monks enter their garden only by a subterraneous passage, which is secured at the end by a very strong door. The garden, which is surrounded by a high wall, is a rich and beautiful spot, created entirely by the great industry of these people. You see there the palm, the cypress, and poplar, with a profusion of vegetables; and vines were bending with large bunches of grapes, in a more forward state even than they were at Cairo. The cultivating this garden is the only resource and amusement the monks have. During Bonaparte's residence at Cairo he ordered the convent wall to be built higher, and sent two pieces of cannon for its defence; but these men of peace never use them, although one discharge would send the Arabs over the Desert in a moment: but these fellows know very well they keep excellent white bread in the convent, and they come and fire their musquets at the walls, with loud threats, till the fathers open the window at the top and throw out a quantity of cakes of bread to the Arabs, who gather them up with avidity, and depart. The convent is supplied with rice and flour by the Greek monastery at Cairo; and the Bedouins allow these supplies

to pass safely, knowing it will be the best way to demand their contributions subsequently. Among the few luxuries here, were excellent almonds and dates, and good cheese, which they had improved out of the coarse article used in Egypt.

LETTER X.

At no great distance from the convent is the scene, in the solitudes of Midian, where tradition says Moses kept the sheep of Jethro, his father-in-law. It is a valley at the back of the Mount, between two ranges of mountains. A solitary group of trees stands in the middle. The superior apologised for his inability to supply us with any other than vegetable food, and advised us to buy a goat of the Arabs. A miserable creature, which had been obliged all its life to keep Lent on the rocks, was purchased for seven piastres; and, being pulled up through the window, was slain for the Christians' use, and served up, dressed in different ways, for dinner in the evening; but it proved so meagre, and had so unhappy a flavour, that we were obliged to abandon it.

A venerable monk, above ninety years of age, the oldest in the convent, paid us a visit

in our apartments: he had resided here seventy years; and we asked him in what manner his life had passed during this best part of a century's confinement within the convent and garden-walls. One day, he said, had passed away like another; he had seen only the precipices, the sky, and the desert; and he strove now to fix all his thoughts on another world, and waited calmly the hour of his departure. He then dwelt much on the vanity of human pleasures and the nearness of eternity, and ended by asking me, very earnestly, for a bottle of rum. We had but one left for our future journey, but gave it, however, to gratify the old father, who requested that my servant, when he brought it to his cell, would conceal it beneath his cloak, lest his brethren should catch a glimpse of it.

On the third morning we set out early from the convent for the summit of Mount Sinai, with two Arab guides. The ascent was, for some time, over long and broken flights of stone steps, placed there by the Greeks. The path was often narrow and steep, and wound through lofty masses of rock on each side. In about half an hour we came to a well of excellent water; a short distance above which is a small ruined chapel. About half way up,

was a verdant and pleasant spot, in the midst of which stood a high and solitary palm, and the rocks rose in a small and wild amphitheatre around. We were not very long now in reaching the summit, which is of limited extent, having two small buildings on it, used formerly by the Greek pilgrims, probably for worship. But Sinai has four summits; and that of Moses stands almost in the middle of the others, and is not visible from below, so that the spot where he received the law must have been hid from the view of the multitudes around; and the smoke and flame, which, Scripture says, enveloped the entire Mount of Sinai, must have had the more awful appearance, by reason of its many summits and great extent; and the account delivered gives us reason to imagine that the summit or scene where God appeared was shrouded from the hosts around; as the seventy elders only were permitted to behold "the body of heaven in its clearness, the feet of sapphire," &c. But what occasions no small surprise at first, is the scarcity of plains, valleys, or open places, where the children of Israel could have stood conveniently to behold the glory on the Mount. From the summit of Sinai you see only innumerable ranges of rocky mountains. One ge-

nerally places, in imagination, around Sinai, extensive plains, or sandy deserts, where the camp of the hosts was placed, where the families of Israel stood at the doors of their tents, and the line was drawn round the mountain, which no one might break through on pain of death. But it is not thus: save the valley by which we approached Sinai, about half a mile wide, and a few miles in length, and a small plain we afterwards passed through, with a rocky hill in the middle, there appear to be few open places around the Mount. We did not, however, examine it on all sides. On putting the question to the superior of the convent, where he imagined the Israelites stood: every where, he replied, waving his hands about—in the ravines, the valleys, as well as the plains.

Having spent an hour here, we descended to the place of verdure, and after resting awhile, took our road with one of the guides towards the mountain of St. Catherine. The rapture of Mr. W.'s feelings on the top of Sinai was indescribable; I expected to see him take flight for a better region. Being the son of a Rabbi at Munich, the conviction of being on the scene where God visited his people, and conferred such glory on them, was

almost too much for him. After ascending again in another direction, we came at last to a long and steep descent that commanded a very noble scene, and reached finally a little valley at the bottom, that was to be our resting place for the night. The mountains rose around this valley in vast precipices—a line of beautiful verdure ran along its whole extent, in the midst of which stood a deserted monastery. The fathers had long been driven from it by the Arabs, but its various apartments were still entire, and afforded an excellent asylum for a traveller. This deep solitude had an exceeding and awful beauty;—the palms, the loftiest I ever saw, rose moveless, and the garden and grove were desolate and neglected; the fountain in the latter was now useless, and the channel of the rivulet that ran through the valley was quite dry; the walls were in ruins, and the olive, the poplar, and other trees, grew in wild luxuriance. Some old books of devotion were yet left behind within. Having chosen an apartment in the upper story, which opened into the corridor, and had been one of the cells of the exiled fathers, we took possession of it at night, kindled a fire on a large stone in a corner, and made a good supper of the rude provisions we had. There needed no

spirit of romance in order to enjoy the situation exquisitely; few ideal pictures ever equalled the strangeness and savageness of this forsaken sanctuary in the retreats of Sinai. A quantity of dry shrubs had been spread on the floor for our bed, but it was impossible to sleep yet, as the moon had risen on the valley, and one of the Arabs went to another part of the corridor and played his rude guitar for our amusement. But still we slept soundly that night after our fatigues, and were called, long before sunrise next morning, by the Arabs, to ascend St. Catherine's. The path was almost always steep, sometimes even precipitous, and consisted of loose stones which gave way under the feet. The wind was extremely cold: the Arabs' hands were quite cramped by it. With great pleasure we reached a well of water deadly cold, beneath a perpendicular precipice, where it was never visited by the sun. After resting awhile, we again ascended, always amidst rocks of vast height, of the most grand and imposing forms, till we reached the summit, which was a very small peak, not above fifty feet in circumference; the wind here was so keen and subtile, that it seemed to pierce through us.

St. Catherine's, supposed by some to be

Mount Horeb, is the highest mountain in all the region around; but from its summit, as far as the eye could reach, nothing was to be seen on every side but ranges of naked mountains succeeding each other like waves of the sea. Between these rocky chains there are in general only ravines or narrow valleys. We at last began to descend, and with great pleasure reached the well again, and having climbed to the ledge of rock beneath which it stood; we kindled a fire and boiled some coffee, which drank like nectar; the cold was quickly banished from our frames, and we got into excellent spirits. Were my fancy stored with eastern imagery, I should exhaust it all in praise of this most excellent beverage, which is the real amulet and never-failing resource amidst fatigues and all sorts of hardships and privations.

We now descended to the desolate monastery in the glen, and taking each an Arab pipe, solaced ourselves in the abodes of the fathers, till the sultry heat was passed, and then proceeded for about two hours till we came to the celebrated rock of Meribah. It still bears striking evidence of the miracle about it, and is quite isolated in the midst of a narrow valley, which is here about two hundred yards broad. There are four or five fissures, one above the other, on

the face of the rock, each of them about a foot and a half long, and a few inches deep. What is remarkable, they run along the breadth of the rock and are not rent downwards; they are more than a foot asunder, and there is a channel worn between them by the gushing of the water. The Arabs still reverence this rock, and stuff shrubs into the holes, that when any of their camels are sick they may eat of them and recover. Two of the holes at this time were filled with reed for this purpose, and they believed it to be endowed with a peculiar virtue. The rock is of a beautiful granite, and is about five yards long, five in height, and four yards wide.

This narrow valley soon opened into a plain, capable of containing a large number of people, where they probably stood, as well as around the rock, and in the valley, to receive the water that poured down. It is difficult to take that passage in Scripture literally, which says that the water from the rock followed them in their journeyings, when it is considered that from the nature of the country, their course was afterwards over rocky and rugged places and tracts of sand: to have carried that water over stony ascents and along dry and desert paths, which absorb all moisture, would have been an infinitely greater miracle than the bringing it at

first out of the rock, or reproducing it in different parts of their journeys. Perhaps the passage may be intended to convey the latter meaning.

The two servants had been left behind in the convent, as Michel had been taken ill with a fever, and we were not aware that our Arab guides were disposed to act so treacherous a part. We had left the spot about an hour; it was after sunset, and we were not very far from the convent, and were congratulating ourselves on being soon in our luxurious little cells, and enjoying a good supper after our fatigues, when we perceived some camels and dismounted Arabs standing at a small distance on the left; they had waited for us in this spot, and now called loudly to us to stop. We disregarded this, and walked on, when a Sheik advanced, and seized Mr. C. who shook him off. A young Arab, being enraged at this, drew his pistol, and presenting it, was about to fire, when another chief seized his arm, and in a moment we found ourselves surrounded and in the power of these Bedouins, who were twelve in number, among whom were three Sheiks; they were all armed with matchlock guns and sabres. Our effects and arms were in the convent, and we had nothing with us worth taking. They had arrived from

their camp, some days distant, to demand a contribution of provisions from the monastery, which was refused by the fathers, the demand being so large, and they declaring they could not comply with it without permission from the superior convent at Cairo. The Arabs being enraged, and aware of our being abroad, resolved to seize on, and detain us till a ransom was paid, or their demands complied with. In the confusion of the capture, and the noise of so many speaking at once, we hardly knew what they would be at; it was vain to tell them we were Ingleise, and at peace with them; that we were friends of the Pacha of Egypt. They lighted the matches of their musquets, and marched towards the convent, and, on approaching the garden wall, held a parley with two of the domestics on the top of it, and then proceeded beneath the high window, where, being much enraged, they were prepared for any violence. After calling loudly for some time, one of the monks reluctantly appeared at the window, and held a brief conversation with them; but it came to nothing. Had they known any thing of an escalade, with what joy would they have stormed the convent, and put every one to the sword! We were then conducted some dis-

tance down the valley, till we arrived at the place where the night was to be passed; it was bright moonlight, and being very thinly clad, we felt the air extremely chill.

Hassan, the chief, was a tall and noble-looking man, with eagle eyes, and teeth like the driven snow. He swore vehemently that he cared nothing for the Sultan of Turkey, of England, or for Mahmoud Ali; that no power should rescue us out of his hands. Beside some low and ruined walls a fire was kindled, the party soon assembled around it, and a cloak was laid on the ground behind, where the three captives were to rest. The fire was immensely large, and burnt fiercely, and threw its glare on the wild and dark features of the circle of Arabs around it, who conversed with vivid animation, and with passionate gestures. They had the civility to hand us a small cup of their coffee—a poor exchange for the good supper we had lost. If ever a day's exertion deserved a bed of down, it was the ascent of St. Catherine's; but our couch was the hard ground. I took a stone for my pillow; my companions were little better off; but we were quite exhausted with fatigue, and imagination fled in vain to our luxurious little chambers in the convent, with their soft cushions, and lamp already lighted, and the harmless monks ga-

thering around. The cold wind awoke me in the night; the Arabs were fast asleep around the glowing embers of their fire, and, stepping cautiously over them, I got beside it, and never in my life enjoyed its warmth more. That night-scene was a fine subject for a painter: the precipices that rose close at hand, on which the moonlight rested; the sleeping figures of the Arabs round the fire beneath, and the ruined walls beside; the wild and solemn character of the scenery, fitted beyond all others to be a theatre for miracles, would have made an assemblage of objects but seldom beheld together.

The next morning, before sunrise, they were ready to depart for their camp, two or three days' journey distant. We made known to Hassan our uncertainty and apprehension of what would be their behaviour to us, when the chief lifted his right hand to Heaven, and swore by Allah we should suffer no injury while in his power: an oath which is seldom violated by them. Being all mounted on camels, we set off; towards evening we proceeded at a brisk trot, and entered the wilderness of Paran. The sun was setting, and we passed, at no great distance, Mount Paran: its form was most singular, yet indescribably grand; it had three sharp and pointed

summits, and its side towards the wilderness was formed of perpendicular precipices of rock; between its three summits, which rose like towers, were cast the declining beams of the sun. It brought to mind the fine passage in the Prophet, "The glory of God shined from Mount Paran," &c.

The walk of the camel is not disagreeable, but the trot at which we had lately advanced, was no small inconvenience. Mr. W., who was rather unaccustomed to riding, disliked it much; he lamented our misfortune the most of any of the party; and he had reason, since his career of doing good to the people round Sinai and Tor was put a stop to, his journals and papers left in the convent, and it was uncertain how long this captivity was to last. He was an excellent young man, and full of zeal in the prosecution of his object, but very unfit to meet with reverses of this kind, or to struggle with evils out of the path of his mission. He was our only interpreter with the Bedouins, as he had some knowledge of the Arabic language.

The chief had given us reason to expect we should this night sleep under cover, and enjoy a comfortable meal, both of which we stood greatly in need of; but after travelling two or

three hours after dark, and looking in vain for the light of some dwelling, we halted in the midst of the wilderness, where the sand was again to be our bed. Our supper consisted of some cake made of coarse flour and water, kneaded flat, and baked in the embers, and some coffee, without milk or sugar; however, we partook of it sociably with our captors, and then lay down to rest near some high bushes, through which the cold wind whistled shrill during the night. We set out long before sunrise next morning. The valley of Paran now became very narrow; the barriers of lofty rocks on each side approached each other closely; among them were often seen veins of various and beautiful marble. The hosts of Israel are supposed to have marched from the Red Sea to Sinäi by this route. After advancing about three hours, we halted at a beautiful grove of palm-trees in the valley, in which was a spring of excellent water; some Arabs resided here, and we looked with anxiety for our breakfast. Of all modes of life upon earth, that of the Arabs possesses the fewest indulgencies: they placed on a rock a large piece of the cold cake left the night before, for our breakfast, and which being unleavened, was as heavy as lead; and

the lonely grove of palms, and the sublime scenery of the wilderness, were insufficient at that moment to appease our vexation; for the pleasures of imagination, or the picturesque, would all have been instantly bartered for a good comfortable breakfast.

We then proceeded, without halting, till about four o'clock, when we came to a small encampment of Arabs, who were the friends of Hassan's tribe. It was interesting to see the meeting of these friendly tribes in the desert: from their wandering habit of life, and their frequent and distant journeys, they seldom meet; but when they do, the pressing of the hand to the heart, the kiss on the cheek, the passionate exclamations and gestures of joy, prove the sincerity and fervour of their feelings. These Arabs insisted on our staying all night with them: we were very happy to hear this, as it was yet some hours ere sunset, and the journey of the day had been long enough.—The camp consisted of ten tents ranged in a line; in one of these we were all accommodated. Our entertainers killed a goat for supper by way of a feast; it was boiled, as all their meat is, and served up, cut into large pieces, on dishes of wood; we had to help ourselves with our fingers: there were also thin cakes of

bread, and a dish of melted butter to dip them in. This mountain-goat was eaten with great relish, and coffee was afterwards served round, with pipes. The Arabs appeared to enjoy themselves very much, and passed a long time in conversation; but as night drew on, they all dropped off one after another, and left us in possession of the tent, in common with a number of goats, who inhabited the further part. In the middle of the night, I was awoke by something moving near me, and putting out my hand, laid hold of a huge black goat, who probably considering his territory invaded, had come to reconnoitre the intruders; he then went and trampled over W. who was buried in a profound sleep, and whom the dim light from the desert scarcely allowed to distinguish what kind of being molested him:—at last, having completely broken our repose, which we could scarcely afford to lose, the goat calmly walked off to his own quarters.

Our servants at this time were living safely and luxuriously in the convent. Franco was quite at home, and ate his meals in peace and good will, although, being a Catholic, he could hold little Christian fellowship with such heathens as the Greeks; however, he took possession of his master's room, reposed on the

cushions, and sang his German hymns with much comfort. Michel was ill of a fever, and implored Franco to take a camel and follow and attend us during our captivity; but he shrunk at the idea of being in the hands of such lawless idolaters, where his outward man would be famished, and the inner one sorely buffetted and tried. The good fathers had wept at our capture, and protested their inability to afford the smallest alleviation. During the whole of the day that followed it, the convent was assailed by a fire of musquetry from a number of Arabs, which rendered it unsafe to walk in the corridor or stir out of the apartments. This affords an illustration of the memorable print kept in the convents of Sinai and Cairo, which is given to all pilgrims to carry to their homes, and of which several were presented to us. In this print is a lofty and vivid representation of Mount Sinai, rising up like a huge tower: Moses is seen toiling up the steep, with a long beard and staff, and nearly arrived at the top; beneath is the convent of Mount Sinai, out of the window of which is pushed the bald head of a monk, who is engaged in relieving the wants of the wicked Arabs, who, drawing their bows, cover the sands below; the arrows are seen flying and

the loaves of bread falling at the same moment: the rock of Meribah, though some distance off, is brought in sight, and the water gushing forth. In the background, although near two hundred miles off, is seen the passage of the Red Sea by the Egyptians; and Pharaoh, who leads them on, is shown sinking in his chariot, to hasten which catastrophe, Moses, who stands on the shore, has just aimed a tremendous blow at him with a cudgel.

Few pilgrims, however, approach Mount Sinai now; and that intercourse with their fellow-creatures, which the resort to the convent formerly afforded the fathers, they are now almost entirely deprived of. The chief part of the day they are shut up in their cells or walking in the garden, and at evening they are to be seen seated on benches before the doors of their apartments; each, when the weather is cold, with his little pot of charcoal burning before him.

LETTER XI.

At an early hour on the following day, we quitted this Arab camp. The wilderness through which we travelled, afforded a variety of romantic scenes. In a few hours we came to a long and steep defile, and soon afterwards reached a well, the only one in the surrounding region: it was in the sand, and a flight of steps descended to it. The Arabs stopped to give their camels water here, and said we should soon be at their camp. It was near mid-day when we arrived at it. It consisted of fourteen tents ranged in a line, the chief's being at the end; he gave us the tent adjoining his own, and we took possession of our new abode. All these tents had only three sides, were flat at top, and quite open in front. Each contained a family, by whom these wanderers were received with joy; indeed they seemed to feel that they were now at their

own home and their own threshold. But such a home as that Arab camp was, has probably been but rarely seen; it was a perfect prison of nature, and stood in the midst of a naked valley of white sand, about three hundred yards broad and a mile in length, and was inclosed on every side by black and lofty precipices: we had entered it by a winding and narrow defile, and it appeared to have no outlet. It was useless for our captors to keep a strict eye over our motions, as they had hitherto done, for every attempt at escape would have been in vain. They gave us some bread and dates for dinner, and we then strove to amuse ourselves as well as we could. But so destitute was this place of all resources, either for the imagination or the senses, and so dreary was its aspect, that our spirits sunk involuntarily, and the hours passed most heavily along.

Could the eye but have rested on one cheering object, a spot of verdure or shade, even a lonely palm-tree, there would have been something to have solaced our *tædium;* but from morning till night nothing was to be seen but the precipices and the bright sand, on which the sun glared so fiercely, that it was often painful to gaze upon.

The other sheiks now parted from Hassan, and went to their homes. In the evening we sat round the fire at the door of our tent, drank coffee, and smoked a pipe to pass the time, and the Arabs sometimes joined us. The hatred these people bear to the monks is excessive; they made use of every oath in their language when abusing them, and a chief took a piece of brown bread from his vest and held it up—"Is this good," said he, "for us to eat, while in the convent they have it so white?" The sons of devils and of perdition, they declared, should not be feasting within their walls in that manner. Another cause of their hatred was the Book of Might, which they protested and believed the priests kept in the convent, and buried it for the greater part of the year in the earth. They said this book had power, whenever it was opened and exposed to the air, to bring rain upon the earth; so that their hearts were made glad, and their deserts refreshed. But the priests, out of the malice they bore to the Arabs, kept it in general buried deep; in consequence they were seldom blessed with any rain.

The ignorance of these Bedouins was very great; they professed to be Mohammedans, but they never made use of prayer, nor was

the least appearance of devotion ever observable amongst them. Even in this secluded spot, so inveterate is the force of habit, that the Arab women, whenever they made their appearance, had their faces closely veiled. Hassan had two wives, Amra and Mirrha, the one young and the other elderly, and we often heard their voices in the adjoining tent; sometimes they appeared to be in altercation, from the shrill and scolding tone of the senior bride.

To vary the scene, I sometimes climbed up the rocks, and sat for hours, but the view was bounded by the narrow glen beneath, and the precipices above, behind which the sun sank at an early hour; and when the gloom of evening fell, and the air became chill, we were glad to assemble in our tent round a fire. It is said that men in a state of extreme hunger often dream of banquets and tables of luxury:—the imagination was here perpetually wandering to scenes of verdure and loveliness; often Crusoe's lonely island floated before me; and groves of orange-trees, sweet fountains, and banks of perfume, became almost embodied in this scene of desolation. There was no water nearer to the camp than the well at which we stopped on our approach, and the camels were sent thither every day. No situation could be

better adapted to the Bedouins than this: it was scarcely possible for a stranger to discover it, and it was still more difficult to attack it. Yet their condition possessed few things to attach them to it, save its unbounded liberty: surrounded by lands of despotism, they were beyond the reach of power or pursuit, and might truly call these wild and waste regions their own.

In appearance these men were light and active, though very slender, and had all of them expressive dark eyes and beautiful teeth. The quantity of food they consumed was excessively small, little else than coarse cake baked in the embers, and a little coffee twice a day. They were not very cleanly in their way of eating; for their favourite dish, of which they invited us to partake, consisted of a number of warm cakes, broken up into a large wooden vessel; a quantity of warm water was then poured on them, and, some fat being also mixed, the whole was stirred well with the hand; and then the Arabs formed in a circle round the dish, and plunged their dark hands promiscuously into it. After they had devoured about half the contents, they rose, and another circle took their place and finished them. One evening, however, they killed a goat, which they

procured from the mountains, for our supper, and we formed in a large party about it; and though the pieces of meat and bones into which the poor animal was dissected, were by no means sightly or delicate, the whole was devoured without ceremony.

These people appeared to live on the most kind and amicable terms with each other, as if they formed but one large family. But the silence of the camp was very oppressive, the human voice was not often heard, and the tread of the foot was scarcely distinguishable on the soft sand. The women sometimes passed the door of our abode, but they dared not stop even to gaze. One evening, as we were sitting in the tent and engaged in conversation, the curtain of Hassan's tent was slowly lifted up behind, and a dark hand, the wrist loaded with massive bracelets of silver and horn, made its appearance, and, soon after, the countenance of the young wife of Hassan. The girl gazed earnestly at the Christians, of whose nation she had probably never seen one before, and then pointed expressively to her eyes, and waved her hand to and fro; she imagined, no doubt, we were hakims or physicians, as the Arabs think every Christian is; and her eyes had been evidently injured, perhaps by the

glare of the sunbeams on the sands. Mr. C. however, who had some knowledge of medicine, shook his head at the idea of meddling with the eyes of an Arab beauty; she looked very disappointed, but, the voice of Hassan being heard at no great distance, the curtain was instantly dropped, and she disappeared. Several times this interview was repeated: one or two parts of our dress attracted her extreme curiosity, particularly the frill of a shirt, which she pulled towards her dark eyes and examined minutely, and spoke earnestly in a tone of intreaty, and thinking it was removeable, strove to retain it; but the chief was at a distance on these occasions, or else his jealousy would have been excited.

Of all the evils that ever befel mankind, the confusion of tongues was surely one of the worst: it would have been a luxury to have been able to hold converse with this poor Arab bride, whose knowledge of the world was probably bounded by the rocks around the solitary encampment. But our companion's knowledge of Arabic was of little use on this occasion, as he stood in that singular apprehension of women, or of the consequences resulting from their presence here, that the moment the girl

put her head into the tent he fled over the sand as if pursued by a wild beast.

But our captivity was soon to be put an end to, and that by a singular and unexpected circumstance. In passing through Suez, we had an audience of the governor, and Ibrahim, a young Arab chief, had seen that we were courteously received: he was unwell, and begged some medicine, which Mr. C. gave him, and it proved of great benefit. One day, Mr. W. had strolled to the other end of the camp, and was astonished to meet with Ibrahim, who, travelling through the desert, had chanced to stop for a short time at this spot. The young man instantly inquired what could possibly have brought us there, and Mr. W. informed him of all the circumstances of our detention, at which he expressed great indignation, and the other offered him a present of some money on our joint account, if he would endeavour to procure our liberation. The prospect of the reward, and the gratitude which he really felt for the kindness shewn him at Suez, conspired to induce him to use every effort to this end. He mounted his camel, and, though it was night, instantly rode off to the residence of his brother Saléh, who was the superior chief in the

whole territory. Early the next morning, Saléh arrived in company with Ibrahim; and having sent word to the surrounding parts in the course of the day, above thirty sheiks had arrived in the camp, being an assembly, as Ibrahim expressed it in his Oriental style, of "all the great, the wise, and the glorious."

Their consultations now began; and it was very interesting to see them formed in a large circle on the sand, debating on the subject of our liberation; many of them were venerable men, with long beards descending on their breast. The dispute sometimes grew warm, and was accompanied with vehement action. Saléh, who was a man of mild and dignified aspect, had great influence over them: he was employed and trusted on some occasions by Mahmoud Ali, and was resolved we should be set at liberty; and all the chiefs, except the tribe of Hassan, seconded his opinion. "I know well," said Saléh, "that the English are favoured by the Pacha; their consul is his friend; and when he hears that you have taken some of this nation prisoners, he will send Turkish soldiers to attack your camp, and either put you to death or carry you and your families captives to Cairo." This chief spoke little, but seemed to listen attentively to the debates

of the others, several of whom sometimes spoke at once in a loud tone of voice, while at other times the whole listened with deep attention to the discourse of one of their number. During the heat of the day they assembled in a large tent, and formed two long rows, at the head of which one of the sheiks presided. For a long time Hassan and his people sullenly refused to consent to set us free; and it was not till the evening of the second day that they were obliged to accede, and we were informed that on the following morning we were to depart. It was delightful news to us. The sheiks seated themselves at the door of our tent at night, and we sipped our coffee, smoked, and conversed in good fellowship. The chiefs then mounted their camels, and departed. Ibrahim, our friend, lingered behind the others. The scene was now entirely changed, and we felt how much sweeter it is to have a little power than to be subject to that of others. Before their departure, the superior sheik requested us to write a letter to Cairo to the authorities, and to say, that whereas some persons, void of understanding, had taken us prisoners, the chief Saléh was resolved to have them punished. This, most probably, would never be done; or, at least,

only on the young Arab who was about to give one of us the contents of his pistol at our first meeting them, and who was angrily menaced by Saléh. On the afternoon of the following day we left the camp, well mounted and attended; for Hassan, passing from one extreme to another, now resolved to conduct us himself to Cairo with his own camels and some of his people. We had not travelled many hours ere we arrived at a tent or two of a friend of the chief's, with whom we were to pass the night. Having supped, one or two songs were sung by the Arabs, and the evening passed pleasantly.

Franco had now joined us; and being relieved from all his fears, besides being refreshed by a good supper, commenced his German psalmody with great fervour, but was soon compelled to stop by the Arabs, who never could abide the music of his voice.

It was useless now to think of returning to Mount Sinai, as we must have retraced our steps; so we resolved to proceed direct to Cairo. These Arabs sell their camels occasionally, and purchase corn and coffee at a cheap rate in Egypt. By their use of the brandy and sugar in our possession when they met with us, it appeared they would consume those ar-

ticles with avidity, could they have them; but tea they disliked extremely. The camel of Hassan was a fine animal, much superior to any of the others. One day that Hassan was mounted on another camel, he was run off with over the desert at full speed, as far nearly as the eye could reach; and though a very strong man, he could not stop the animal. The only way on these occasions is to pass the bridle tightly over the nose, which instantly arrests their speed. On all occasions where swiftness is required, the dromedary is used, and very frequently by the Tartar messengers, who will travel night and day with incredible diligence.

In three days, travelling slowly, we reached the shores of the Red Sea: it is here a fine sheet of water, about ten miles broad. This is the place where the Israelites are supposed to have crossed. Directly opposite on the other side, the mountains, which above and below form a continued range, are divided; and, sloping gently down, leave a space or valley of about six miles broad, through which the Israelites passed on their way from Pihahiroth. Near the spot where we were, are the hot springs; they are several in number, and are warm enough to boil an egg in a few minutes. Our provisions had fallen very short;

and two birds having lighted not far off, one of the Arabs shot them both at one fire with his matchlock gun, and Franco undertook to make a savoury stew of them; but, to our great disappointment, they had a flavour of carrion, and we were obliged to yield them up to Franco, who despatched them both with considerable *gout*.

A good part of the next day we passed in the small valley of Hirondel, covered with stunted palm-trees, amongst which, and on the sand, a number of locusts were flying about. They were nearly as long as one's finger, very like a grasshopper, and of a light red colour. Michel joined us here with our effects from the convent, having quite recovered from his fever. The superior, who had bitterly bewailed our misfortune, exclaiming that no travellers would come again to the convent, if they were thus exposed to the rapacity of the Arabs, had spent several hours in his chamber every day during his illness, conversing with great avidity on the affairs of Greece. His solitude had not deadened his interest in the concerns of the world, with which he appeared to be well acquainted; and his manners shewed that he had not always led a monastic life.

Departing for Suez, we fell in at night with

a small caravan; and, a number of large fires being lighted, we passed the night together, and supped on a small deer or antelope, which had been shot by one of the Arabs.

The next day we met with a small party returning from a pilgrimage to Mecca: they had travelled an immense distance. A Turk, the best-dressed of them, was seated in a houda. This is a light frame of wood, fixed on the back of a camel, with a seat on each side, and is a very easy and indolent mode of travelling. This Turk appeared to have been comforting himself in the howling wilderness with forbidden things, as we thought he was rather tipsy; but let not such a thing be lightly believed against one of the faithful, as it is certainly rare among them; though we afterwards met and dined with a rich Islamite merchant, who, if asked to drink wine, would be displeased at the mention of such a liquor, denied even to the Prophet, but, when it was presented to him as rosolio, the name of a sweet cordial, took off a large bumper with great heartiness.

In two days more we arrived at Suez, and again received a kind welcome from the Consul; and his good wine and dinner of Eastern dishes appeared uncommon luxuries to us, after such extreme privation. It being low

water on our approaching Suez, we had forded the Red Sea on the camel's back, about a mile above the town. The day after our capture by the Arabs, my servant had sent a camel from the convent to Cairo with intelligence of the circumstance; and the Consul being at Alexandria, as also was the Pacha, his secretary informed the Kiaya Bey, the chief officer of the latter, of the circumstance, and an order was instantly sent to the governor of Suez to despatch some of his troops to the Arab camp, to attack it and bring the Arabs prisoners, with ourselves, to Cairo. Our liberation, fortunately, was too early for the execution of this order; but the Arabs, who were eagle-eyed to discover all who pass on their deserts, would probably have been aware in time of the approach of the Turkish soldiers, and have struck their tents, mounted their camels, and fled with us into the heart of their deserts. The governor of Suez sent his son to wait on us, and to inquire into all the particulars, that he might transmit them to Cairo. In the former audience which he gave us, he had behaved very courteously; but the firmaun of the Grand Seignior he threw on the sofa, and pressed that of Mahmoud Ali to his lips and forehead. We had found, indeed, in Upper

Egypt the Sultan's passport to be so useless, that we ceased to produce it; for some of the Sheiks do not scruple to call him a great beast. This Aga was a handsome and mild-looking man: he had only one wife, and no mistress; and his son stood before him with his hands folded on his breast.

Leaving Suez, we travelled on some hours; and, after dark, saw the lights of a caravan, that had halted on the sand. We joined the travellers, and found the scene rather interesting. They were seated in various parties round fires scattered over the desert, around the embers of which they at last lay down to repose. On the tenth day after leaving the Arab camp, we arrived at Cairo. Hassan, the chief, had grown very fearful, during the last two days, of entering the city, and entreated us earnestly to intercede, that the Pacha's anger might not fall upon him, as he knew well, he would think as little of taking off his and his people's heads, as of taking a pinch of snuff. However, we took care that no harm happened to him, and parted from the chief, after all, with something like regret; for the deserts had made us intimate. We made him a present—a poor substitute for the ransom he had expected; and he went back again to his

desolate valley. The transition from thence to our spacious apartment, garden, and fountain at Cairo, was very agreeable.

We had not the opportunity of making the tour of the whole of the region of Sinai, yet we traversed three sides of the mountain, and found it every where shut in by narrow ravines, except on the north, in which direction we had first approached it. Here there is, as before observed, a valley of some extent, and a small plain, in the midst of which is a rocky hill. These appear to be the only open places in which the Israelites could have stood before the mount, because, on the fourth side, though unvisited, we could observe from the summit, were only glens or small rocky valleys, as on the west and south; for the precipices opposite rose near and high: and a country like this can change little in the progress of ages. If water was not more plentiful of old than at the present time, it was impossible for so numerous a people to have been sustained without a constant miracle in their favour; the number of wells is so small, and in summer so soon exhausted.

Having hired a Cangia, we parted from Mr. W. and went down the Nile to Alexandria. With some eccentricities, arising from igno-

rance of the world, he was an amiable and excellent man. To his knowledge of Arabic chiefly were we indebted for our own liberation from the deserts. Mr. C. took passage for England. My stay at Alexandria was rendered more pleasant by the hospitality and attentions of Mr. Lee, the consul, which every traveller experiences in an eminent degree. Christmas-day was celebrated at his house by a large party and an excellent entertainment, and it passed most agreeably. Yet the weather felt so chill in the afternoon, it being January, that we were glad to assemble round the fire. Intending to proceed to Palestine and Syria, I engaged a passage in a vessel of the latter country bound to Saide.

LETTER XII.

We left Alexandria with a fair breeze, and the prospect of a speedy passage; the voyage to Saide being often accomplished in three days. But on the second day the wind became adverse, and we were compelled to drive up and down off the Egyptian coast, as if we were never to lose sight of it. The captain had been imprisoned some days at Alexandria for some offence; and as the vessel could not proceed without him, I interceded with the consul, and procured his liberty. He was grateful for this, and gave me the best accommodations in the ship, which was no small advantage, as there were several other passengers on board. On the floor of the cabin was stretched a Jewish rabbi, in his last sickness; he was a very well-informed man, and was intimately known to Lady Stanhope. His chief desire, and the only object of his voyage, was to go

to Palestine to die, which was very soon accomplished, as he lived but a few days after our arrival. He had travelled, and was well versed in the Scriptures, and all the traditions of his people; and related with great pleasure how he had foiled in a public argument in Egypt a missionary who was sent for the conversion of his brethren. The calms and baffling winds annoyed us exceedingly; the Jew bore them patiently, but not equally so with a Turk, who had laid his carpet on the deck, on which he continued seated nearly all the day, and stretched by night; his pipe in his hand, some very coarse provisions for his food, and those used very sparingly. He regarded the vicissitudes of the weather with perfect tranquillity, only uttering occasionally "The will of God be done!" Had the vessel gone to pieces, he would have shewn, probably, neither surprise nor despair. On the tenth day, however, we were cheered by the sight of Mount Carmel, and drew slowly near its foot; and soon were landed in the boat at the small town of Caifa, while the bark pursued its voyage to Saidē.

Having gone through the ceremony of being examined by the Turkish officer, there being a war at that time in the country, we were

allowed to look out for a lodging. The town had but a sorry appearance, and consisted chiefly of one long street, with the governor's house at the end. There had been a Catholic convent in a noble situation on the side of Carmel; but it was destroyed not very long before by the young Pacha of Acre, and was now only a heap of ruins. The poor solitary priest who tenanted it was expelled his comfortable home, and at present occupied a small house in the town beneath, where he gave us a cordial reception. It was a sorry dwelling, and a wretched substitute for his roomy and delightful convent, where he was lord of the whole domain. He possessed two apartments; the dark kitchen conducted by a crazy flight of stairs into a small eating and sleeping apartment, with a large open window that looked over the whole bay. After a long delay he produced a repast, consisting of eggs, cheese, and some tolerable wine. On the wall the names of two travellers were pencilled, who had lodged in this apartment, a Mr. Hyde, whose journeyings have been very extensive, and another Englishman. The old priest and Michel discussed their wine below in the evening very sociably; the former was full of some news lately arrived from Italy; of the Pope

having had a long and particular conference with St. Peter, and of the wonderful revelations the apostle had made. In the night it blew very hard, and the rain and wind sadly invaded the privacy of the father's chamber.

We were obliged to go very early in the morning to the governor's secretary to procure a passport for Acre. The Turk had just risen from his slumbers, and seemed much out of humour and uncomfortable, as the air was chill, and he had not had his cup of coffee. We at last left Caifa, remarkable for nothing but the beauty of many of the children in the streets, and proceeded towards Acre. The whole of the route is over the sandy beach, and it was crossed by a rapid stream, which, owing to the late heavy rains, was scarcely fordable.

Having reached Acre about mid-day, we were compelled to wait three hours before any admittance could be obtained, as the young Pacha was in his seraglio, and they dared not disturb him. During this interval, some rogue stole my umbrella and a solitary bottle of rum, neither of which could be replaced, and the former was a serious loss in such a climate. At last, to our great relief, admission was granted, and we proceeded to the convent, and met there with Mr. A. the consul-general

for Syria, but newly arrived from England, and my old travelling companion, Mr. W.

The next morning, in company with Mr. W. and a merchant of Aleppo, we left Acre for Tyre. The way led for some distance over the fine and extensive plain at the end of which the town is situated; it was varied as we drew nearer the hills, by two or three chateaux of Turkish gentlemen amidst the trees, and about mid-day we halted at a rivulet, and made a pleasant repast. The merchant was a very unprincipled but agreeable fellow, and being a native of Aleppo, spoke Arabic and Turkish beautifully. We soon ascended a lofty hill, over which the path is exceedingly delightful and commanding. The plain of Acre was behind, and Tyre visible on the shore, a considerable distance in advance; and the bold and craggy cliffs we were ascending repaid the toil of the way.

Towards evening we came to a small and lonely khan, and resolved to make it our lodging for the night. Some Syrian peasants gathered round, and we took our evening meal under the rude corridor, while the moon shone splendidly on the bay and shore, close to which the khan stood. Such moments as these are full of vivid enjoyment. Before

day-break we quitted this spot, and in a few hours arrived at Tyre.

This town, by no means so desolate as it has been sometimes represented, contains nearly two thousand inhabitants, and is surrounded by a wall. We put up at the Catholic convent, if it deserves the name,—some wretched small apartments in the sides of a court. In the evening the fathers disturbed us by their nasal singing in the church, which is open to the winds of heaven, having scarcely any roof. There are a few good houses in the place, and, visiting two or three families, we were made welcome with a pipe, a cup of coffee, or other drink. The island on which the ancient city stood, has of course long since disappeared.

The next morning we set out for Sidon; the weather was beautiful, and we enjoyed an agreeable ride. This town is very pleasantly situated, and surrounded with rich gardens. We took up our abode in some apartments belonging to the French consul, with naked walls and floor:—the traveller here, as throughout the East, must bring his own utensils and bedding with him; but fatigue and novelty sweeten all things. In the evening we paid a visit to a merchant's family of Sidon; and some sweet Oriental dishes, prepared by the lady

of the house, with some excellent wine, were served up. The gardens of Sidon were full of fruit, and the cottages of the peasants stood in the midst of them.

At about an hour and a half's ride from the town is the residence of Lady H. S. It is situated on the top of a hill, and called Marilius, from the convent of that name that formerly stood there, and out of part of which, with her own additions, she has constructed her present mansion. There are few trees round it, and it is very exposed; in the background are ranges of barren hills; the prospect beneath, of the gardens of Sidon and the bay, is magnificent. Having two letters of introduction to her ladyship, one from an intimate friend, I made sure of an interview; but, as ill-luck would have it, my servant in his haste left this letter in the apartment at Sidon, and the one which was presented would not avail me. In the small room where I was introduced was suspended an immense Arab lance. In a short time, the only English inmate, Miss W. brought a polite apology from her ladyship, intimating that she regretted she could not break her invariable rule not to see English travellers. Having afterwards understood from the consul that I possessed her

friend's letter, she favoured me with two notes, saying that she should be happy to receive it and see the bearer if he came that way again; but, being then at a considerable distance from her residence, the pleasure of such an interview was never enjoyed.

This extraordinary woman no longer possesses the daring and chivalric spirit which led her to Palmyra and other perilous parts of the East. She is now become very nervous, and has for some time put great faith in nativities, and the productions of a venerable Arabian, who passes for an astrologer or magician, and often visits Marilius. Her habits of life have long been not to retire to rest till five in the morning, and to rise at two in the afternoon, and eat scarcely any animal food; but her house contains a good store of choice wines, and the various conserves of the East. Although she sits on the floor, and eats with her fingers, her visitor is indulged with a table, knife and fork, and a variety of dishes. Her household consists of three-and-twenty Arab servants of both sexes, as her English ones have long since been dismissed. She scarcely ever rides now, although she has a stud of twelve fine Arabian horses. In conversation, as a friend of hers, who several times visited

her, assured me, she is very agreeable, but it must be during the witching hours of night, when her ladyship loves most to converse. Arabic she speaks pretty well, and with the natives and manners of the East she is of course thoroughly acquainted. Among Turkish women, she says, she has met many admirable and attractive characters, but among the Greeks not a single one. Woe be to the woman of her own nation, who should reside for a short time at Marilius! she must expect to submit to all the seclusion of the land, as, if any Sheik or Turk comes to the house, she must not only shun his presence, but be sure not to let a glimpse of her face be seen: no infringement on Eastern etiquette can ever be allowed there.

The influence this lady has over the surrounding pachas and governors is truly singular. A merchant of my acquaintance from Smyrna was returning from Damascus to Beirout with some camel loads of silk: they were stopped in the way by the pacha of Acre, who intended to use no ceremony in making them his own. The merchant was in partnership in this concern with a rich Moor at Beirout, who was intimately known to her ladyship, and immediately wrote to her requesting her in-

terference. She sent a note to the pacha, and an order was speedily transmitted to his soldiers to set the camels and their cargo at liberty.

Lady S. lived at Damascus for twelve months in a handsome house in the suburbs; and often, when she rode out in her Mameluke dress, the people would flock around her in admiration. When on her "journey to Palmyra, she was pursued by a hostile tribe of Arabs for a whole day; and on the day when the Palmyrenes hailed her as the Queen of the ruined city, she felt, no doubt, vivid and undissembled pleasure, being the first lady who had ever achieved such a journey; and her excellent horsemanship and capability of enduring fatigue, soon made the deserts a home to her. The Orientals never speak of her but with the highest respect." It is certain that a belief is entertained of her being of the highest rank: some even say she is a queen. She distributes occasionally presents of rich arms to the chiefs; and when an Arab courser is sent her, frequently rewards the bearer with a thousand piastres. She is generous, hospitable, and undoubtedly of that superior and commanding mind, which is sure to gain an ascendancy among the Orientals. Yet it is difficult to dis-

cover any attractions in her present way of life at Marilius. The romance and delight of exploring the East, and seeing its natives bow down to her, have long since given place to timid and secluded habits and feelings, and the dreams of superstition. She is, however, firmly resolved never to return to her native country; her avowed contempt for her own sex, and their effeminate habits and feelings, is not likely to conciliate them.

Although she refuses, from the real or supposed ill treatment of one or two English travellers, to see any of her countrymen, she has more than once been their benefactor. On one occasion she presented a traveller at Damascus with two thousand piastres, whose money had failed him in a journey from India. When an unfortunate Frenchman, a man of science, was shot by some Arabs from behind the rocks, as he was sketching a scene in some of the mountains in the interior at a considerable distance, she was at a great expense in recovering his papers and books for his relations, and procuring for them every intelligence.

On the following day we proceeded to Beirout, and in a couple of hours came to a miserable khan; then passing over a sandy tract, at the close of day we entered the pleasant and

shady lanes leading to Beirout, which look very much like English ones. Being recommended to the house of M. Massad, a native, I proceeded thither, and ascending a flight of steps, entered a small paved court, with apartments all round it. My abode here would have pleased the most fastidious taste; the apartment had three windows in front, which looked over the town and gardens, and Mount Lebanon at three miles distance, its interior summits covered with snow: and the window in the end looked over the bay. Massad was a respectable-looking old man; he had two sons and one daughter, who went about the house with a dozen strings of gold coins dangling about her ears and neck. Our table was provided with as fine beef from Mount Lebanon as could be had in England, and excellent wine. At least a dozen sorts of wine are produced from this mountain and its neighbourhood, red and white: among the latter the Vindoro is one of the best; they are all cheap enough. This town, the ancient Berytus, contains six thousand inhabitants: the situation is the most beautiful of all the Syrian towns; the environs are laid out in plantations of mulberry-trees, and a quantity of silk is produced and exported.

The war between the two Pachas of Acre and Damascus at this time disturbed the whole country, and rendered travelling very unsafe. The exactions and oppressions of the former harass the people excessively. An instance of this occurred at Sidon a week after my arrival. The Pacha sent to a Turkish gentleman of property there to demand a very large advance, which he refused to pay, but soon received intelligence that more summary means would be adopted. He knew there was no time to be lost; assembled his few faithful servants, and after taking a very affecting leave of his wife, whom he tenderly loved, rode off to Damascus, carrying with him the most valuable and portable part of his property. The day after, the Pacha's officer arrived from Acre and seized all the effects that were left behind, without, however, insulting the lady, who could not accompany the rapid flight of her husband. This young Chief of Acre is capable of any enormity, and has bribed the Prince of the Druses to assist him in his war with the Damascenes.

The consul, Mr. A., had now arrived at Beirout; and, having procured an excellent house, I resided with him for a few weeks very agreeably. This house was built by a Greek merchant, at a considerable expense, for his own

residence; when the Governor of Beirout, which is in the pashalic of Acre, sent to order him to deliver it up, as he wished to inhabit it himself. The merchant, terrified, fled to the interior of Mount Lebanon, where I afterwards met with him. Just at this time the Consul arrived; and, the house being unoccupied, he demanded it for his own use; and the Governor, after much altercation, thought proper to concede it. The poor merchant sent a most grateful letter to Mr. A. for preserving his house from the hands of the Governor.

A great number of granite pillars, in a broken state, however, are to be seen along the shore beneath the tide, and part of the causeway on the quay is chiefly built up with them. About four hundred years ago Faccardine, the Prince of the Druses, possessed a handsome palace and gardens without the town. This man's history has been written; for he was a remarkable character, and had spent some time in Italy, where he cultivated the sciences, and built his palace after the edifices he had admired there. He was assassinated, and his beautiful domain laid waste; some of the ruins, however, still remain.

The rainy season had now set in: scarcely a day passed without showers; and the roads

were rendered so bad that travelling was impracticable. Rain in an Oriental country throws a traveller sadly out of his resources: books, of course, he has few, but must pass the evenings sitting on the divan with a vessel of lighted charcoal before him on the carpet, and his pipe and a cup of coffee. At last, however, the weather cleared up; the caravans, which had been stopped, resumed their passage, and we set out to visit the Emir Busheer, Prince of the Druses. The way was for the most part over the mountain; and in about nine hours we came to the town of Dalil Camar, and were fain to pass the night in a coffee-house.

Early the next morning we went to the chief's residence, which is admirably situated for defence; it stands on a rugged cliff, and is approached by a winding path over low stone steps. Industry, however, has created a sort of garden on one side of it. Some apartments of the palace are rather elegantly fitted up, and furnished with glass windows. It is surrounded by extensive courts, around which are the rooms for the officers and domestics. The power of this prince is very considerable; extending all over Mount Lebanon and many of the adjacent parts. In a short space of time he can raise thirty thousand armed men: and

these mountaineers are bolder troops than those of the lowlands; a large proportion of them are horsemen. He had brought several thousands into the field to aid the Pacha of Acre in his war with the Pacha of Damascus. On being introduced to the Emir, he was seated on the divan of a large apartment—a man about sixty, of a venerable appearance, with a long beard, almost white, in which he took great pride. Sherbet and pipes were brought, and we were invited to remain for the night at the palace. He dissuaded me from advancing to Balbec, in consequence of the war, and the armies being out, which rendered the road insecure. The snow also had fallen in such quantities as to make any progress in that direction impossible. This man has a religion to suit the place he may be in: when he comes down to Beirout, he goes to the mosque; but in the mountain he is always a Christian.

During my stay in the latter place, I accompanied the Consul in his first visit of ceremony to the Turkish governor: after refreshments, the latter was presented with an English watch, which he first made a show of refusing, but at last grasped at with no small avidity. The watch was of mixed metal, as the Turks will not accept of any gold or silver; the Pro-

phet having forbidden the use of those precious metals on some occasions. It was made, with five or six others, for the express purpose of presents to these chiefs. This governor took great pleasure in the idea of our being all, by and by, of one faith, and repeated several times with delight, "We shall all be Moslemen together in Damascus;" as they have a tradition of long standing, that the Christians will advance with a mighty army to attack the sacred city, when the Prophet, in his mercy, will convert them all.

About mid-day, being invited to dine with the chief officers of the Prince, we formed a circle round a low table, on which were placed a number of dishes, with an immense pilau of rice in the middle, coloüred with saffron; we were furnished with neat spoons for eating our food—a refinement not always to be found at Eastern meals. While at Beirout I dined one day with a rich merchant, a Moor, and a very handsome man: he possessed a young Circassian mistress, about sixteen years of age, for whom he had given six hundred pounds at Smyrna; this was rather a dear bargain, as she was not beautiful. We sat on the carpet, four in number, and drank tea in the first place, which was made by the Moor, and served

without milk; immediately afterwards dinner was brought in:—first, a dish of soup was placed in the middle of the table; and, being each provided with a spoon, we helped ourselves out of the vessel in common; this being removed, an excellent hash supplied its place; and the spoons being taken away, we plunged our fingers into the dish, and carried whatever came first, meat, vegetables, &c. to our mouths, as there were no plates. Several other dishes succeeded, all very good; and the repast was closed by some delicious cakes, made, no doubt, by the hands of the young Circassian. A most diligent washing of the hands and mouth then took place; and indeed it was necessary.

Having quitted the palace or fortress of the Emir, we returned to the town of Dalil Camar to wait till the roads should become passable by the melting of the snow. Our lodging was a small room in the khan, in the upper story; several merchants occupied the adjoining rooms, and they set out their goods for sale during the day-time in the court below. This part of Mount Lebanon was very barren and craggy, and the houses rose in ridges on its sides.

There are a great number of Druses in and

around this place. The belief and some of the rites of this singular race are but imperfectly known. They are a fine and healthy-looking people; particularly many of the young women, who have a complexion as ruddy as those of the Highlands of Scotland. The Druses never allow intermarriages with strangers, and not unfrequently marry their sisters and daughters. Several of their small houses of worship are scattered over the mountain, but no stranger is allowed to enter. It is computed there are eighty convents on various parts of the mountain, Armenian, Catholic, Greek, and Maronite; and they are often placed in situations of extraordinary beauty. It has been observed by some that the Syrian coast is very subject to fevers; but it is difficult, perhaps, to find a line of country more healthy and attractive than that from Tripoli to Acre. Lady S. has declared the climate to be the most salubrious that she has ever resided in.

Having waited in vain for ten days, and the weather being worse instead of better, we resolved to bend our course towards Palestine; and, having procured horses, arrived on the evening of the following day at Sidon again. We passed the evening very pleasantly in the apartments of Monsieur T. an Italian merchant,

who has resided there several years with his lady;—a dreary situation for an intelligent man; for what climate or scenery can atone for the want of society? In three days more the weather became fine; and we left the town with no small pleasure, being impatient to proceed, after so many delays. Soon after sunset we came once more to the gate of Tyre, and found a warm welcome from the Tyrian family whom we had become acquainted with on our first visit. They were all seated on the floor round the supper-table, parents, sons, and daughters, and we felt no objection to join the party. How delightful was an animated scene like this—the soft cushion and the pipe after a long and fatiguing journey! No traveller in the East, accustomed to the indulgent and natural posture of sitting and reclining there, will ever wish to see a chair or table again.

Continuing our journey, we were late on the following day a few miles from Acre, and were obliged to stop at an Arab village on a hill; and, entering the rude and dirty khan, found it filled with the inhabitants, who were ranged, as thick as they could well be crammed, on the floor, with their backs to the wall, and every mouth filled with a pipe. A fire was blazing beside a pillar in the middle; but the place

looked so suspicious and uninviting that we were at a loss whether to remain or not. In a short time the Sheik stepped up, and civilly invited us to lodge in his house, which we very gladly acceded to. His residence was close to the sea: and that we might not approach too near the persons of his women, he conducted us to a neat and lofty apartment a few yards from the house; the walls and pillars were whitewashed, and some mats spread on the floor. He asked if his women should prepare a repast for us, or if we chose to dress it ourselves. On our preferring the former, in about an hour a very decent meal made its appearance, round which we all assembled. The Sheik, to do me honour, took up the choicest pieces of meat with his fingers and placed them before me: to have declined eating them would have given offence. After supper, to entertain us, he placed his hands on his knees, and broke out into a most stunning and discordant song, and then got up and went through all his prayers and genuflexions with much appearance of devotion. We soon, however, lay down to rest, free from any intrusion or sound, save the dashing of the sea on the rocks beneath our dwelling.

LETTER XIII.

On the following day we came again to Caifa, and found an agreeable lodging in the house of a native, more comfortable and luxurious than the room of the old priest. We ascended the side of Carmel next to the sea, into which it almost descends; and on this part of its summit tradition says Elijah the prophet stood when he prayed for rain, and beheld the cloud rise out of the sea. The next day we ascended the mountain in another part, and traversed the whole of its summit, which occupied several hours. It is the finest and most beautiful mountain in Palestine, of great length, and in many parts covered with trees and flowers. On reaching at last the opposite summit, and coming out of a wood, we saw the celebrated plain of Esdraelon beneath, with the river Kishon flowing through it: Mounts Tabor and Hermon were in front, and on the

left the prospect was bounded by the hills of Samaria. This scene certainly did not fulfil the descriptions given of the desolation and barrenness of Palestine, although it was mournful to behold scarcely a village or cottage in the whole extent; yet the soil appeared so rich and verdant, that, if diligently cultivated, there is little doubt it would become, as it once was, "like the garden of the Lord."

We stood some time gazing with great delight, and then began to descend the side of the mountain, leaving Hassan, our guide, behind, with the horses, cursing the ruggedness and difficulty of the paths. About half way down we met a tribe of Arab gipsies; they had just pitched their tents, and pressed us to stay and take coffee, and even remain all night with them. The accommodations were certainly far from tempting. A young woman of the party had her lips dyed blue, a custom probably among them. We soon reached the banks of the Kishon, at this time so much swollen by the heavy rains that we could not find a ford to cross over; by going much lower down, however, we at last succeeded, and crossing part of the plain, wound up the hills till the night fell, and we were glad enough to meet with a lodging in a wretched Arab village.

On the following day we arrived at Nazareth, which we could not perceive till we were at the top of the hill directly over it, as it stands on the foot and sides of a kind of amphitheatre. Its situation is very romantic; the population amounts to about twelve hundred, who are mostly Christians. The Spanish Catholic convent, in which all travellers are accommodated, is a large and excellent mansion, though the number of monks is reduced to less than one half, on account of the poverty of the establishment, from the failure of remittances from Europe. The church of the convent is rich, and contains a fine organ. Below the floor, and entered by a flight of steps, is the cave or grotto where the angel Gabriel is said to have appeared to Mary; a granite column was rent in twain by the appearance of the angel,—the lower part is quite gone, but the upper part, which passes through the roof, is suspended in the air. The priests tell you that it has no support from above, and that it is an everlasting miracle. There is a handsome altar in this grotto.

We next visited a small apartment which is shown as the workshop of Joseph; this stands at a short distance from the church; part of it only remains, and is certainly kept very neat.

Not far from this is the school where our Lord received his education, and which looks much like other schools. But as curious a relic as any is a large piece of rock, rather soft, about four feet high and four or five yards long, its form not quite circular: on this our Lord is said to have often dined with his disciples.

About a mile and a half down the valley is shown a high and perpendicular rock, as the very spot where our Lord, according to St. Luke, was taken by the people to be thrown over the precipice. About midway down in the face of the rock is the spot where his descent was arrested, and the marks of his hands and part of his form are shown, where he entered into the rock and disappeared. The good fathers do their cause little good by such sad tales. But of far higher interest than traditions and relics is the scenery around Nazareth: it is of the kind in which one would imagine the Saviour of mankind delighted to wander and to withdraw himself when meditating on his great mission;—deep and secluded dells, covered with a wild verdure; silent and solemn paths where overhanging rocks shut out all intrusion.

No one can walk round Nazareth without feeling thoughts like these enter his mind,

while gazing often on many a sweet spot traced perhaps by the Redeemer's footsteps and embalmed by his prayers.

The next day we rode to Mount Tabor, about six miles distant; it stands alone on the plain, and is a very small and beautiful mountain, rising gradually on every side: about the fourth part of the ascent towards the summit is covered with a luxuriance of wood. The top of Mount Tabor is flat and not of large extent; the view from thence is most magnificent. At the foot is shown the village, amidst a few trees, that was the birth-place of Deborah the prophetess. Hermon stands in the plain about six miles off, and at its foot is the village of Nain.

We next proceeded towards Cana by a narrow and rocky path over the mountains. This village is pleasantly situated on a small eminence in a valley, and contains two or three hundred inhabitants; the ruins of the house are still shown where the miracle of turning the water into wine was performed. The same kind of stone waterpots are certainly in use in the village: we saw several of the women bearing them on their heads as they returned from the well: the young women of Cana are said to be handsome.

As the light was fading we returned to the convent, and enjoyed our comfortable cell and repast. Here for the first time we ate the delicious fish caught in the lake of Tiberias; they are very much of the size and colour of mullet. Being admitted to an audience of the superior, the old man bewailed bitterly the dreadful degeneracy of the age, and departure from the faith, as shown particularly in the revolution of New Spain, whereby the revenues of the convent were so reduced:—the Devil, he said, was active and powerful beyond belief in the present day. What grieves the monks the most is, that they cannot live half so well as they used to do:—the wine was very bad;—however, I gave some comfort to one of the fathers, by buying at his own price a small piece, really scarcely visible, of the body of St. Francis, carefully secured in a small inclosure of glass.

Leaving Nazareth, we reached again the foot of Carmel, and afterwards wound along the coast passing by the site of Cæsarea. On the second night, we were obliged to halt early at the khan of a village on the sea shore, there being no other resting-place for a considerable distance. It was yet hot in the afternoon, and the sun found its way through the

shattered roof of the khan; the shore was open and dreary, and not a rock to afford any shadow. Towards evening, however, some other travellers arrived from various parts, soldiers and merchants; fires were lighted, parties assembled round them, and the khan assumed a cheerful aspect. One of the company, wishing to give me a proof of his respect, seized a piece of meat out of the dish he was eating from, and, though he was seated ten yards off, flung it through the air towards me, requesting very civilly my acceptance of it. The pipe, cup of coffee, and conversation followed; and people who never saw each other before, soon became intimate.

Early next day we quitted this village; the path along this part of the coast was dangerous, being infested by robbers; it offered, however, nothing either to annoy or delight us, for it was barren and uninteresting; and in the evening we came again to a wretched village, where the small khan was crowded to excess by two or three Sheiks and their followers, and we were obliged to seek a lodging in a miserable cottage about half a mile further on. With feelings of no small pleasure, on the succeeding day, after some hours travelling, we beheld Jaffa at a short distance.

The route to Jerusalem by the way of Naplouse would have been much pleasanter than the one we had been compelled to adopt; but it had become the seat of war. The gardens around are very pretty, and surrounded with hedges of the prickly pear, which is found all over the coast of Syria; oranges, melons, and other fruits were in abundance.

We found a hospitable reception at the house of Signor Damiani, the consul, who gave us a very good supper, but without a drop of wine, as he was too zealous a Christian to allow it in his house in Lent time: and the quantities of cold water Michel and I were obliged to drink after a sultry day's journey, made us wish the signor had had no more religion than the naked Dervise whom he thrashed so unmercifully one day after inveigling him into his garden. He told us several entertaining stories about Buonaparte, who had sat and chatted on the same sofa on which we were sitting. He praised the Emperor to the skies, though his arrival had nearly ruined him, and he had been compelled to go with him some distance as a guide. Travellers would be sadly at a loss but for the signor's house, though this illustrious sofa swarms with fleas. His appearance is rather singular, as

he wears the Eastern dress, and an English cocked hat over it in token of his office.

About ten yards distant, and in his own domain, is a dark and naked room that is shown as having been the residence of Simon Peter the tanner, and has one or two miraculous pillars in it. The appearance of Jaffa is singular, being situated on so steep a declivity, that the houses almost climb over each other up the face of the hill.

We were now only twelve hours' journey from Jerusalem, and rode to Ramha early on the following day: this place is finely situated on an extensive plain, and has some woods and olive-trees around it. There is a Catholic convent here, which a clever Spanish monk has all to himself; he behaved, however, so uncivilly, that we sought a lodging elsewhere, for which we were indebted to the kindness of a native. In the evening we received a polite invitation from the Armenian convent to visit them, and found a luxurious little habitation with five or six very pleasant fathers; they served us with some excellent spiced coffee and cakes, and, the superior being absent, began to talk thoroughly like men of the world. The Armenians, as we found on more than one occasion afterwards, are the most

gentlemanly monks of all, and allow themselves the greatest latitude.

By moonlight next morning, we were on the way to the sacred city: for about three hours it led over the plain, and then ascending the hills, became excessively disagreeable, in some parts so narrow that one horse only could proceed at a time, and that not always with safety, as the rains had made the rocky paths much worse than usual. At the end of nine hours, however, as we proceeded over the summit of a rugged hill, we beheld Jerusalem at a small distance before us. Its aspect certainly was not magnificent or inspiring, but sad and dreary.

On reaching the gate of Bethlehem, we were speedily admitted, and after some research procured a lodging in the house of a native, not far from the walls and near the tower of David. We had had enough of convents, and a traveller will find himself much more agreeably situated, and more at his ease, in living orientally, than confined within the walls and obliged to conform to the hours of a monastery. However, there is no avoiding one's fate. I had my divan and coffee, excellent wine, and music in the evening, and wished only to remain in peace. But in a day

or two repeated messages came from the superior of the convent, urging my entry into it: it was so unusual for a traveller to lodge without, and so unsafe in those times, and he would come himself to remonstrate with me; so that I was fain to comply. An unlucky letter from the convent of Constantinople, and an unwillingness to lose the fees which every traveller pays, were the causes of this civility. They put me there into a little cold cell, with a single chair and table in it, and a small flock bed, as if I came to perform a pilgrimage; and the pictures of saints and martyrs on the walls were poor consolations for the substantial comforts I had lost. Here, however, it was my good fortune to meet with a most amiable traveller, a Mr. G., an Irish gentleman, whose companion had just left him for Europe.

The morning after my arrival was a very lovely one; and, though it was in February, perfectly warm. I passed out of the gate of Bethlehem, and traversing part of the ravine beneath, ascended the Mount of Judgement on the south side of the city. How interesting was her aspect, beheld over the deep and rocky valley of Hinnom! her gloomy walls encompassing Mount Zion on every side; and, as yet there was no sound to disturb the

silence of the scene. The beautiful Mount of Olives was on the right, and at its feet the valley of Jehoshaphat, amidst whose great rocks and trees stood the tomb of Zacharias, the last of the prophets that was slain: the only stream visible, flowed from the fountain of Siloam, on the side of Zion opposite. It is true, the city beloved of God has disappeared, and with it all the hallowed spots once contained within its walls: and keen must be the faith that can now embrace their identity. Yet the face of nature still endures: the rocks, the mountains, lakes and valleys are unchanged, save that loneliness and wildness are now, where once were luxury and every joy; and though their glory is departed, a high and mournful beauty still rests on many of these silent and romantic scenes. Amidst them a stranger will ever delight to wander, for there his imagination can seldom be at fault; the naked mountain, the untrodden plain, and the voiceless shore, will kindle into life around him, and his every step be filled with those deeds, through which guilt and sorrow passed away, and "life and immortality were brought to light."

The day had become hot ere I returned to my dwelling, just within the walls. It was

the most desirable time of the year to be at Jerusalem, as the feast of Easter was about to commence, and many of the pilgrims had arrived. The streets of the city are very narrow and ill-paved, and the houses in general have a mean appearance. The bazaar is a very ordinary one. The Armenian quarter is the only agreeable part of the city: the convent, which stands near the gate of Zion, is very spacious and handsome, with a large garden attached to it, and can furnish accommodations for eight hundred pilgrims within its walls; the poorer part lodging in out-houses and offices in the courts, while the richer find every luxury and comfort, for all the apartments in this convent are furnished in the oriental manner. The wealthy pilgrims never fail to leave a handsome present, to the amount sometimes of several hundred pounds. If a pilgrim dies in the convent, all the property he has with him goes to the order. The church is very rich, and ornamented in a very curious taste, the floor being covered, as is the case in all their religious edifices, with a handsome carpet.

The lower division of the city, towards the east, is chiefly occupied by the Jews: it is the dirtiest and most offensive of all. Several of

this people, however, are rather affluent, and live in a very comfortable style; both men and women are more attractive in their persons than those of their nation who reside in Europe, and their features are not so strongly marked with the indelible Hebrew characters, but much more mild and interesting. But few passengers, in general, are met with in the streets, which have the aspect, where the convents are situated, of fortresses, from the height and strength of the walls the monks have thought necessary for their defence. Handsomely dressed persons are seldom seen, as the Jews and Christians rather study to preserve an appearance of poverty, that they may not excite the jealousy of the Turks.

The population of Jerusalem has been variously stated; but it can hardly exceed twenty thousand; ten thousand of these are Jews, five thousand Christians, and the same number of Turks. The walls can with ease be walked round on the outside in forty-five minutes, as the extent is scarcely three miles.

On the east of the city runs the valley or glen of Jehoshaphat; that of Hinnom, which bounds the city, on the south and west: and into these descend the steep sides of Mount

Zion, on whose surface the city stands. To the north extends the plain of Jeremiah, the only level space around; it is covered partly with olive-trees. It does not appear possible for the ancient city to have covered a larger space than the present, except by stretching to the north, along the plain of Jeremiah; because the modern walls are built nearly on the brink of the declivities of Zion and the adjoining hill. But the height of this hill is very small, for Jerusalem is on every side, except towards the north, overlooked by hills, higher than the one whereon it stands. When about mid-way up Mount Olivet, you are on a level with the city walls; and the disparity towards the south is still greater. The form of the town is more like that of a square than any other, and its walls are lofty and strong; there are five or six gates: the golden gate, the gates of Damascus, St. Stephen, and Zion, and that of Bethlehem. Close to the latter is the tower of David, a place of considerable strength.

The circumstance that most perplexes every traveller is, to account for Mount Calvary's having been formerly without the city. It is at present not a small way within; and in

order to shut it out, the ancient walls must have made the most extraordinary and unnecessary curve imaginable. Its elevation was probably always inconsiderable, so that there is little to stagger one's faith in the lowness of its present appearance. The exclusion of Calvary must have deprived the ancient city of a considerable space of habitable ground, of which, from the circumscribed nature of its site, there could have been little to spare. But tradition could not err in the identity of so famous a spot: and the smallest scepticism would deprive it of all its powerful charm. Besides that, the disposition of the former Jerusalem appears to have been, in other parts, sufficiently irregular.

The mosque of Omar, the most beautiful edifice in the Turkish empire, stands, in a great measure, on the site occupied by Solomon's Temple. The area around it is spacious and delightful; and being planted with trees, affords the only agreeable promenade in the city. Christians, however, are never allowed to enter it. Its situation is little elevated above the level of the street, so that Mount Moriah, formerly the highest eminence that joined the city, and where the temple stood, is now shorn of its honours. The loftiest part of

the town at present is the western, between the gates of Bethlehem and Zion, where the convents are situated.

The sides of the hill of Zion have a pleasing aspect, as they possess a few olive-trees and rude gardens, and a crop of corn was at this time growing there. On its southern extremity, a short way from the wall, is the mosque of David, which is held in the highest reverence by the Turks, who affirm that the remains of that monarch, and his son Solomon, were interred here, and that their tombs still exist. In a small building attached to the mosque, and where a church formerly stood, is the room in which was held the last supper of our Lord and his disciples: we looked into it through some crevices; it had a mean and naked appearance.

Being now an inmate of the Catholic convent, the best plan was to make oneself as happy as circumstances would allow, and these were scanty enough. The fathers were of the Franciscan order, dirty, sullen, and wretchedly clad; and their wine, which Chateaubriand praises so highly, is execrable. Father Giuseppe, indeed, was the cicerone of the order; a little, amusing, time-pleasing monk, who had a decent little cell, where he

kept some excellent cordial, and other comforts, and had one or two saints frying upon gridirons, pasted on the walls. Each of these fathers cleaned his own apartment, made his bed, and was indebted to no one's service.

Having agreed with Father G. to visit the church of the Holy Sepulchre, we went there in the evening, and, passing through the court, entered the first lofty apartment. There was a guard of Turks in a recess just within the door, to whom every pilgrim is obliged to pay a certain sum for admission; but we were exempted from this tax. In the middle of the first apartment is a large marble slab, raised above the floor, over which lamps are suspended: this is said to be the space where the body of the Redeemer was anointed and prepared for the sepulchre. You then turn to the left, and enter the large rotunda, which terminates in a dome at the top. In the centre of the floor stands the holy sepulchre; it is of an oblong form, and composed of a very fine reddish stone brought from the Red Sea, that has quite the appearance of marble. Ascending two or three low steps, and taking off your shoes, you enter the first small apartment, which is floored with marble, and the walls lined with the same. In the centre is a

low shaft of white marble, being the spot to which the angel rolled the stone from the tomb, and sat on it. You now stoop low to enter the narrow door that conducts you to the side of the sepulchre. The tomb is of a light brown and white marble, about six feet long and three feet high, and the same number in breadth, being joined to the wall. Between the sepulchre and the opposite wall the space is very confined, and not more than four or five persons can remain in at a time. The floor and the walls are of a beautiful marble; the apartment is a square of about seven feet, and a small dome rises over it, from which are suspended twenty-seven large silver lamps, richly chased and of elegant workmanship,—presents from Rome, of the courts, and religious orders of Europe: these are kept always burning, and cast a flood of light on the sacred tomb, and the paintings hung over it, one Romish and the other Greek, representing our Lord's ascension, and his appearance to Mary in the garden. A Greek or Romish priest always stands here with the silver vase of holy incense in his hand, which he sprinkles over the pilgrims.

Wishing to see the behaviour of these people, who come from all parts of the world, and

undergo the severest difficulties to arrive at this holy spot, we remained for some time within it; and the scene was very interesting. They entered, Armenians, Greeks, and Catholics, of both sexes, with the deepest awe and veneration, and instantly fell on their knees: some, lifting their eyes to the paintings, burst into a flood of tears; others pressed their heads with fervor on the tomb, and sought to embrace it; while the sacred incense fell in showers, and was received with delight by all. It was impossible for the looks and gestures of repentance, grief, and adoration, to be apparently more heartfelt and sincere than on this occasion. Yet other feelings were admitted by some, who took advantage of the custom of placing beads and crosses on the tomb to be sanctified by the holy incense, to place a large heap on it of these articles, which, being sprinkled and rendered inestimable, they afterwards carried to their native countries, and sold at a high price.

LETTER XIV.

In an apartment a little on the left of the rotunda, and paved with marble, is shewn the spot where Christ appeared to Mary in the garden. Near this begins the ascent to Calvary: it consists of eighteen very lofty stone steps; you then find yourself on a floor of beautifully variegated marble, in the midst of which are three or four slender white pillars of the same material, which support the roof, and separate the Greek division of the spot from that appropriated to the Catholics; these pillars are partly shrouded by rich silk hangings. At the end stand two small and elegant altars; over that of the Catholics is a painting of the crucifixion, and over the Greek is one of the taking down the body from the cross. A number of silver lamps are constantly burning, and throw a rich and softened light over the whole of this striking scene. The street leading to Calvary has a long and gradual ascent,

the elevation of the stone steps is above twenty feet, and if it is considered that the summit has been removed to make room for the sacred church, the ancient hill, though low, was sufficiently conspicuous.

The very spot where the cross was fixed is shewn; it is a hole in the rock, surrounded by a silver rim; and each pilgrim prostrates himself, and kisses it with the greatest devotion. Its identity is probably as strong as that of the cross and crown of thorns found a few feet below the surface; but where is the scene around or within the city, however sacred, that is not defaced by the sad inventions of the fathers?

Having resolved to pass the night in the church, we took possession for a few hours of a small apartment adjoining the gallery that overlooked the crowded area beneath. As it drew near midnight, we ascended again to the summit of Calvary. The pilgrims, one after another, had dropped off, till at last all had departed. No footstep broke on the deep silence of the scene. At intervals, from the Catholic chapel below, was heard the melody of the organ, mingled with the solemn chanting of the priests, who sang of

the death and sufferings of the Redeemer. This service, pausing at times, and again rising slowly on the ear, had an effect inexpressibly fine. The hour, the stillness, the softened light and sound, above all, the belief of being where He who "so loved us" poured out his life, affected the heart and the imagination in a manner difficult to be described. Hour after hour fled fast away, and we descended to the chamber of the sepulchre. How vivid the midnight lights streamed on every part! the priest had quitted his charge, and the lately crowded scene was now lonely. This was the moment, above all others, to bend over the spot, where "the sting of death and the terrors of the grave" were taken away for ever.

Soon after daylight the pilgrims began to return, and continued their visits till the ensuing night. The fathers lamented deeply the breaking out of the Greek revolution, and the internal war between the two Pachas, which have combined to diminish the number of pilgrims to less than one-fourth part of what it formerly was, as the journey is become too dangerous. Three or four thousand are computed to arrive every year, who afford a productive revenue to the different convents.

But this is in a great measure eaten up by the heavy tax which the different orders are obliged to pay the Turks.

One day we were favoured with an audience of the Armenian patriarch. He was seated on a low divan, in an elegant apartment; and his aspect was noble and venerable. This fine old man is second only in rank to the great patriarch who resides in Persia; he said but little, and that through his interpreter; coffee and sweetmeats were handed round.

A grand procession of the three different orders took place one evening in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. It was curious to observe the spirit of vanity and rivalry displayed on this occasion. First marched the Armenians nine times slowly round the tomb, clad in the most splendid dresses; the robe and tiara of the patriarch were literally loaded with jewels. They bore a number of silk flags, of various colours, with scenes from the Scripture represented on them; and they sang as they moved along, with a consciousness that they outvied their brethren in splendour; but the abominable nasal sounds they produced did not add to its effect. The Greeks succeeded, with far less magnificence, and little

better singing; but the noble and intelligent expression of countenance of their dignified ecclesiastics struck us extremely: they carried bunches of sacred flowers in their hands, which the poor pilgrims grasped at most eagerly, to carry, even when withered, to their distant homes. The fine and solemn chanting of the Franciscans, who came last, completely redeemed their dirty habits, coarse ropes, and shaven crowns.

One day as Mr. G. was walking without the city, he perceived my old fellow-traveller in Egypt, Mr. W. who had come to reclaim his countrymen, the Jews, sitting forlorn at the gate of Bethlehem; but he sprang up with rapture as soon as he saw him, for his spirit was sad and desolate, he said, to find himself in his own fallen country, and surrounded by strangers. He was so fortunate, by means of an excellent letter of introduction, as to find a home in the Armenian convent, where he had a luxurious apartment, and the society of some intelligent fathers. He was an excellent linguist, but had been nearly starved by the monks of Antoura, a convent on Mount Lebanon, where he went to perfect himself in the Arabic, and who allowed him only a couple of eggs a day, with bread, to subsist on. He

had an audience in a few days of the Turkish governor, who received kindly from him a Persian copy of the New Testament.

It will be found, that the Turks in general possess far more tolerance of opinion and practice than we give them credit for. I have heard many of them observe that good men of all religions will be received into Paradise; and in all the cities of their dominions are to be found churches and convents of every Christian sect, enjoying perfect freedom of worship, and protection from insult in their rites and ceremonies. But the conduct of the Christians of Jerusalem to each other, and the bitter hatred they mutually manifest, are sufficient to give the Moslemen a contemptible opinion of Christianity. About five years ago a furious scuffle took place around the Holy Sepulchre. The time for the Catholic priest's stay in the tomb being expired, the Greek brother came to occupy his place, as they take this duty in turn. The Catholic refused to quit it, when a warm altercation ensued, and the Franciscan struck the other a violent blow on the head with the vase of holy incense. At sight of his blood flowing, the Greek cried out loudly; and the fathers of each church running in, the contest became general, and was only

allayed by the superior. Even during the time of Easter, knives have been drawn and wounds given in the church, by the zealous of the different orders. It is said the Turkish guard at the entrance sometimes beat and abuse the pilgrims; but this can only be on occasion of their noisy and riotous entrance.

I have seen well-dressed Turks looking on at the processions in the church with perfect quietness and serenity. The Armenian patriarch one day sent Mr. W. a present of a large goat and a loaf of sugar, and we found him very much at a loss what to do with the former; but as it was evident his highness, though keeping strict Lent himself and his flock, intended it to be eaten, we advised him to have it killed and dressed for dinner. The next day the goat made its appearance in soup, and in half a dozen stews and ragouts besides; and, but that the patriarch had sent some most excellent wine, it would have been difficult to get through the banquet.

One of the fathers, a middle-aged man, and interpreter to the patriarch, was already on very intimate terms with Mr. W. and high in his estimation, but he would not share in this repast in his own convent. Father Paolo Titiungi, having tried one or two paths before,

had at last become an Armenian, and was a complete specimen of a clever, worldly, and designing monk. He listened with an appearance of deep interest to the earnest discourses the stranger addressed to him, wept occasionally, saw clearly into the iniquities of his past life, till at last no one, in his own, and his new friend's opinion, could be so proper to be at the head of an Armenian establishment, to be founded in some part of Italy, and for which funds were to be raised in England. We invited him to dine with us at the convent one day with Mr. W. A late traveller has dwelt with some admiration on the excessive strictness of the Armenian priests in Jerusalem during the time of Lent. If Father P.'s observations about his brethren are to be believed, there is a good deal of room for scepticism on the subject. It was Lent, however, and we doubted if we had any thing for our guest to eat. But Father Titiungi always refusing each offer at first, contrived to eat heartily of every dish on the table, and the wine also was not spared; and in the cool of the evening, as we walked on the terraced roof, the good father could not refrain from singing a song.

We rode yesterday, accompanied by Antonio, the young Catholic guide, to Bethlehem,

a distance of about six miles. The way led over a barren plain, for some distance, till we arrived at the monastery of St. Elias. Bethlehem soon came in view, on the brow of a rocky hill, whose sides and feet are partially covered with olive-trees. On the right, about a mile from the village, is shewn the tomb of Rachel; it has all the appearance of one of those tombs erected often to the memory of a Turkish santon.

After dining very frugally at the Franciscan convent, it being Lent, we visited the church built by the Empress Helena: it is large, and supported by several rows of marble pillars, but has a very naked appearance. Leaving the church, and descending thirteen stone steps, you are in the place that was formerly the stable where the Redeemer was born. There is no violation of consistency in this, as the stables in the East are now often formed in the same way, beneath the surface. Its present appearance is that of a grotto, as it is hewn out of the rock, the sides of which, however, are concealed by silk curtains; the roof is as Nature made it, and the floor paved with fine marble. A rich altar, where the lamps are ever burning, is erected over the place where Christ was born, and the very spot is

marked by a large silver star. Directly opposite to this is another altar, to signify the place where the Virgin Mary and her child received the homage of the Magi; and over it is a painting descriptive of the event.

The second visit we paid to Bethlehem was a few days afterwards; and the monks being either absorbed in sleep, or in their devotions, as we could get no entrance to the convent, we found our way again to the grotto alone, and remained there without any intrusion. It is of small size, and not lofty; the glory, formed of marble and jasper, around the silver star, has a Latin inscription, "In this spot Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary." A narrow passage leads to the study of St. Jerome; and not far off is shewn his tomb, near to which are the tombs of St. Paula and another pious lady. Ascending again, you enter the churches of the Greek and Armenian orders, but there is nothing particular in either.—About a mile down the valley towards the wilderness, is the field where the shepherds kept watch by night, when the angels announced the birth of our Lord. Two fine and venerable trees stand in the centre, and the earth around was thickly covered with flowers. It is so sweet and romantic a spot, and so well suited

to be the scene of that high event, that it would be painful to admit a doubt of its identity. At Bethlehem are sold the beautiful shells of mother of pearl, brought from the shores of the Red Sea; the surface is carved with various designs of the last supper and the crucifixion, by the inhabitants of the village; and they are purchased by the pilgrims.—Small crosses also, cut out of the shells, are carved in the same way. The village contains about seven hundred inhabitants, who appear to live very meanly.

At some distance from Bethlehem, and in rather a desolate spot, are the cisterns or reservoirs formed by Solomon to supply Jerusalem with water. They are three in number, and rise up the hill over each other, so that the water flows down in a full stream from the highest, and descends from the lower one into the valley, and from thence, assisted by a small aqueduct, passes, by a course of seven miles, into the city, which it enters immediately by a subterraneous passage. These cisterns are sustained by strong buttresses, and are of various sizes, the lower one being above six hundred feet in length; they are evidently of the highest antiquity, and stand at present very much in need of repair. The spring that

supplies them is not far off, and issues some feet below the ground.—From hence to Hebron is a distance of seven hours; it is a large town; and a Turkish mosque is built over the cave where Abraham and Isaac were interred; but it is scarcely possible to obtain admission into the mosque. We repented afterwards not having visited this town, the most ancient in the Land of Promise.

It was easy to perceive, in the condition of the monks, that the habit of residing constantly about the sacred places took away all their novelty; they go over the detail as heartlessly as if attending an exhibition. Father Giuseppe complained bitterly of his having been obliged to sing and pray for three months together in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, for the priests must take this duty in turn; and during the time, soon after dawn, of the celebration of high mass in the tomb of the Virgin Mary, one of the priests entered into a gay conversation, asserting that every man should be indulged with a couple of wives. The effect on them at last, perhaps, of relics, chants, and holy places, is similar to that produced on the old monk, by the sacred territory of Mount Sinai, who said that for seventy years he had seen little but precipices, sand, and sky.

We returned to Jerusalem in the evening. Having sent to the governor, for permission to visit the Dead Sea, accompanied by a guard, he refused it very civilly, but decidedly. In the present disturbed state of the country, he said, when the Pacha of Acre's troops were besieging Naplous, only nine hours distant, and the roads were infested by stragglers from the armies, he could not be responsible for our safety; and we must wait for more peaceable days.

The places within the walls of the city, which tradition would render sacred, are innumerable. Beneath the gate of Bethlehem is shewn the spot where Bathsheba was bathing when the king beheld her from the roof of his palace, and the present tower of David is built on the site of the ancient edifice. A small distance within the gate of St. Stephen that fronts Olivet, is the pool of Bethesda: it is deep and dry, the sides and bottom overgrown with grass, and containing two or three trees. A wretched street leads from this to the governor's palace, a spacious and rather ruinous building of Roman architecture; it contains some good apartments, the windows of which command an excellent view of the mosque of Omar and its large area. In the palace, the

monks point out the room where Christ was confined before his trial; and at a short distance is a dark and ruinous hall, shewn as the judgement-hall of Pilate:—a little further on is the arch where the Redeemer stood, as his judge exclaimed "Behold the man." – You then proceed along the street where Christ bore his cross; in which, and in the street leading up to Calvary, are the three places where, staggering under the weight, he fell. These are marked by three small pillars, laid flat on the ground. The very house of the rich man also is here, and the spot where Lazarus sat at his gate. Our faith had been on the wane long before we had accomplished the tour of all these places; for on what authority, save that of priesthood, can they possibly rest; since the ancient city was so completely levelled by Titus?—We were invited one evening to join a procession of the Franciscans, in a solemn visit to the sacred spots within the church of the Sepulchre. They were clad in white vestments, and carried each a long wax taper, one of which was given into our hands. The service was very impressive, and the chanting fine. At every place rendered holy by tradition, they knelt

for some time, till they entered into the chapel where Helena was interred, and then descended into the vault where the cross was found. The interior of the church of the Sepulchre is of great extent, as it contains, besides the sacred places, the chapels of the Franciscan, Greek, and Armenian orders. The first are losing ground before the aspiring and intriguing spirit of the two other bodies. The Greek chapel is extremely rich, but has too great a profusion of ornaments. The whole of Mount Calvary, and the lower ground about it, is inclosed within the "sacred church," and surmounted without by a large dome of a dark colour, which, from its conspicuous situation, is visible in almost every view of the city. They performed in the Catholic chapel, one morning, a disgusting and revolting ceremony. A young man was brought forth, meanly clad, and of a slender make, and a large cross being laid on his shoulders, he walked slowly round, followed by a number of people. He put on a sad countenance, and seemed to bend and faint beneath the burden of the cross; and at every pause he made, there was wailing and sobbing among the people; they at times knelt down, a monk

prayed or chanted in a mournful tone, in which they all joined; and thus the ceremony lasted for some time.

It is beautiful to turn from such scenes to others where the faith is confirmed and the imagination delighted. Such is the fountain of Siloam: it rises about half way down Mount Zion, and gushes, from beneath a little arch nearly ten feet below the surface, into a small pool, about two feet deep. This is quite open, and the rocky sides of the spot are cut smooth: on the south side a flight of steps leads down to it; the water is clear and cool, and flows down the mount into the valley beneath to a considerable distance. At this stream the women of the city generally come to wash their linen, and its banks are in some parts shaded with trees. On a pleasant spot here, a poor Turk had brought his little coffee-shed, his pipes, and bread, to refresh the passenger. Down this romantic valley, watered by the stream from Siloé, was my favourite walk; at the head of it the valleys of Hinnom and Jehosaphat meet, and it winds between rugged and desolate hills towards the wilderness of St. Saba. It was frequented by few.

One evening I observed two poor Turks, who were returning to their homes: the hour

of prayer being come, they quitted the path, and crossing the stream, knelt down side by side on its bank, in deep and silent devotion. It was infinitely striking; and if weighed in the balance with the vain processions and vile ceremonies in the ill-fated city, which would be lightest in the account?—To the north of the town, and not very far from the walls, is the magnificent cavern, called that of the prophet Jeremiah. Here, it is said, he retired to pour forth his lamentations. As far as size, gloominess, and grandeur go, it well merits its appellation: it is held in no small regard, as the key of the gate is carefully kept. No spot could have been more suitable to the utterance of the woes against the devoted city, and the mournful and impassioned feelings of the inspired prophet.

A pilgrim, however, who comes to the city, must set no bounds to his faith, as he is shewn the place where the head of Adam was found, the rock on which the martyr Stephen was stoned, and the place of the withered fig-tree; with the milk of the Virgin Mary, and some of the tears that St. Peter wept on his bitter repentance. Beneath a large spreading tree down the valley, where the soil is rather elevated, is the place where the prophet Isaiah was

sawed asunder.—Among the pilgrims was a Servian and his wife, who had come a great distance from their own country to visit the Sepulchre. This poor man was so enraptured at what he saw, that he gave forty pounds, great part, no doubt, of his property, as a present to the convent.—An Armenian, a man of property, died about this time in the convent: the monks, as is the custom, took possession of all he had with him, and turned his poor servant out, without even paying him the wages due from his master. A curious instance was related to us of the uncertainty of regarding too highly many of the spots pointed out as sacred, by a gentleman whose travels brought him to the city about this time. He had gone to the summit of Calvary; and his mind being deeply affected with the solemnity of the scene, he knelt down, where the hole of the true cross was pointed out to him, and though no worshipper of that, yet it served to bring vividly to remembrance all that had passed around. But in the midst of his beautiful reverie and blissful feelings, he was suddenly startled by the guide Antonio clapping him on the shoulder, with "Signor, Signor, this is not the true hole; it is farther on." In an instant every solemn feeling was put to flight, and the charm irreparably broken.

LETTER XV.

THE confined situation of the city is redeemed by the magnificent view many parts of it command of the Dead Sea, and the high mountains of Arabia Petræa, forming its eastern shore. This view is towards the south-east, over the valley, between the hills of Judgment and those adjoining Olivet.

The strong and commanding position of Mount Zion could have been the only reason for fixing the capital of Judea in so extraordinary and inconvenient a situation. Very many parts of the coast and the interior afford a far more favourable site in point of beauty and fertility, or for the purposes of commerce. The city, of old, was often subject to a scarcity of water; the fountain of Siloam and another on the east side, with the brook Kedron, being the chief supplies without the walls; but the latter, probably, possessed little or no water during

the summer heats. It was reckoned as a memorable act in one of the kings, that he made a pool and a conduit, which are still called Hezekiah, and are at the end of the eastern valley. The whole compass of the ancient city, according to Josephus, was only thirty-three furlongs, so that an extension of half a mile along the plain of Jeremiah to the north would give it its ancient size, and in a great measure, it is probable, its ancient position. The present circumference is, no doubt, correctly stated by Maundrell to be two miles and a half. Josephus distinctly states "the old wall went southward, having its bending above the fountain Siloam," and this fountain in the side of Zion is not far without the present wall. Again the historian says, "the old wall extended northward to a great length, and passed by the sepulchral caverns of the kings," which caverns, or tombs of the kings, are now above half a mile without the walls to the north on the plain of Jeremiah. But the small valleys which divided the interior of the old city are now filled up, and many of the elevations levelled. The whole surface of the hills on which Jerusalem and its temple stood, of which Mount Moriah cannot now be distinguished, were, no doubt, much loftier formerly,

or else the hollows beneath have been partly filled up. The latter, it is very probable, has been the case. "These hills," the history observes, "are surrounded by deep valleys, and by reason of the precipices belonging to them on both sides, they are every where impassable." This description does not apply to the present appearance of either; no precipices, either steep or difficult, existing.

But, although the size of Jerusalem was not extensive, its very situation, on the brink of rugged hills, encircled by deep and wild valleys, bounded by eminences whose sides were covered with groves and gardens, added to its numerous towers and temple, must have given it a singular and gloomy magnificence, scarcely possessed by any other city in the world.

The most pleasing feature in the scenery around the city, is the valley of Jehoshaphat. Passing out of the gate of St. Stephen, you descend the hill to the torrent of the Kedron; a bridge leads over its dry and deep bed; it must have been a very narrow, though in winter a rapid stream. On the left is a grotto, handsomely fitted up, and called the tomb of the Virgin Mary, though it is well known she neither died nor was buried near Jerusalem. Being surprised, however, on the hills by a

long and heavy shower of rain, we were glad to take shelter beneath the doorway of this grotto.

A few steps beyond the Kedron, you come to the garden of Gethsemane, of all gardens the most interesting and hallowed; but how neglected and decayed! It is surrounded by a kind of low hedge, but the soil is bare; no verdure grows on it, save six fine venerable olive-trees, which have stood here for many centuries. This spot is at the foot of Olivet, and is beautifully situated; you look up and down the romantic valley; close behind rises the mountain, before you are the walls of the devoted city. While lingering here, at evening, and solitary, for it is not often a footstep passes by, that night of sorrow and dismay rushes on the imagination, when the Redeemer was betrayed, and forsaken by all, even by the loved disciple. Hence the path winds up the Mount of Olives: it is a beautiful hill; the words of the Psalmist, "the mountains around Jerusalem," must not be literally applied, as none are within view, save those of Arabia. It is verdant, and covered in some parts with olive-trees. From the summit you enjoy an admirable view of the city: it is beneath, and very near; and looks, with its valleys around

it, exactly like a panorama. Its noble temple of Omar, and large area planted with palms; its narrow streets, ruinous places and towers, are all laid out before you, as you have seen Naples and Corfu in Leicester-square. On the summit are the remains of a church, built by the Empress Helena; and in a small edifice, containing one large and lofty apartment, is shewn the print of the last footstep of Christ, when he took his leave of earth. The Fathers should have placed it nearer to Bethany, in order to accord with the account given us in Scripture; but it answers the purpose of drawing crowds of pilgrims to the spot. Descending Olivet to the narrow valley of Jehoshaphat, you soon come to the pillar of Absalom: it has a very antique appearance, and is a pleasing object in the valley; it is of a yellow stone, adorned with half columns, formed into three stages, and terminates in a cupola.

The tomb of Zacharias, adjoining, is square, with four or five pillars, and is cut out of the rock. Near these is a sort of grotto, hewn out of an elevated part of the rock, with four pillars in front, which is said to have been the apostles' prison at the time they were confined by the rulers. The small and wretched village of Siloa is built on the rugged sides of the hill

above; and just here the valleys of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat meet, at the south-east corner of Mount Zion; they are both sprinkled with olive-trees. Over the ravine of Hinnom, and directly opposite the city, is the Mount of Judgement, or of Evil Counsel; because there, they say, the rulers took counsel against Christ, and there the palace of Caiaphas stood. It is a broad and barren hill, without any of the picturesque beauty of Olivet, though loftier. On its side is pointed out the Aceldama, or field where Judas hung himself: a small and rude edifice stands on it, and it is used as a burying-place. But the most interesting portion of this hill, is where its rocks descend precipitously into the valley of Hinnom, and are mingled with many a straggling olive-tree. All these rocks are hewn into sepulchres of various forms and sizes; no doubt they were the tombs of the ancient Jews, and are in general cut with considerable care and skill. They are often the resting-place of the benighted passenger. Some of them open into inner apartments, and are provided with small windows or apertures cut in the rock. There is none of the darkness or sadness of the tomb; but in many, so elevated and picturesque is the situation, that a traveller may pass hours here with

a book in his hand, while valley and hill are beneath and around him. Before the door of one large sepulchre stood a tree on the brink of the rock; the sun was going down on Olivet on the right, and the resting-place of the dead commanded a sweeter scene than any of the abodes of the living. Many of the tombs have flights of steps leading up to them; it was in one of these that a celebrated traveller would fix the site of the holy sepulchre; it is certainly more picturesque, but why more just, is hard to conceive; since the words of Scripture do not allow the identity of the sacred tomb to any particular spot, and tradition on so memorable an occasion could hardly err. The Fathers declare, it long since became absolutely necessary to cover the native rock with marble, in order to prevent the pilgrims from destroying it, in their zeal to carry off pieces to their homes; and on this point their relation may, one would suppose, be believed.

The valley of Hinnom now turns to the west of the city, and extends rather beyond the north wall: here the plain of Jeremiah commences, and is the best wooded tract in the whole neighbourhood. In this direction, but farther on, the historian of the siege speaks "of a tower, that afforded a prospect of Arabia at sun-

rising, and of the utmost limits of the Hebrew possessions at the sea westward." The former is still enjoyed from the city; but the latter could only be had at a much greater distance north, where there is no hill in front. Above half a mile from the wall, are the tombs of the Kings. In the midst of a hollow, rocky and adorned with a few trees, is the entrance; you then find a large apartment, above fifty feet long, at the side of which a low door (surmounted by a beautiful frieze) leads into a series of small chambers, in the walls of which are several deep recesses, hewn out of the rock, of the size of the human body. There are six or seven of these low and dark apartments, one or two of which are adorned with vine-leaves and clusters of grapes. Many parts of the stone coffins, beautifully ornamented in the Saracenic manner, are strewed on the floor; and it should seem that some hand of ravage had broken them to pieces, with the view of finding something valuable within. The sepulchres of the Judges, so called, are situated in a wild spot about two miles from the city. They bear much resemblance to those of the kings, but are not so handsome or spacious.

Returning to the foot of the Mount of Olives, you proceed up the vale of Jehoshaphat on a

line with the plain; it widens as you advance, and is more thickly sprinkled with olives. When arrived at the hill at which it terminates, the appearance of the city and its environs is rich and magnificent; and you cannot help thinking, were an English party suddenly transported here, they would not believe it was the sad and dreary Jerusalem they were gazing on. This is the finest point to view it from, for its numerous minarets and superb mosque are seen to great advantage over the trees of the plain and valley, and the foreground is verdant and cultivated. One or two houses of the Turks stood in this spot; and we had trespassed on the rude garden of one of them, where the shade of a spreading tree invited us to linger over the prospect. For some days there had been heavy falls of rain, yet the bed of the Kedron was still dry, and has been so, most probably, for many centuries. The climate of the city and country is in general very healthy. The elevated position of the former, and the numerous hills which cover the greater part of Palestine, must conduce greatly to the purity of the air. One seldom sees a country overrun with hills in the manner this is; in general they are not in ranges, but more or less isolated, and of a

picturesque form. Few of them approach to the character of mountains, save Carmel, the Quarantina, the shores of the lakes, and those which bound the valley of the Jordan. To account for the existence of so large a population in the promised lands, the numerous hills must have been entirely cultivated; at present their appearance on the sides and summits is, for the most part, bare and rocky. In old time, they were probably formed into terraces, as is now seen on the few cultivated ones, where the vine, olive, and fig-tree flourish.

On a delightful evening we rode to the Wilderness of St. John. The monastery of that name stands at the entrance; it is a good and spacious building, and its terrace enjoys a fine prospect, in which is the lofty hill of Modin, with the ruins of the palace of the Maccabees on its summit. A small village adjoins the convent, in which are shewn the remains of the house of Elizabeth, where the meeting with Mary took place. But few monks reside in the convent, which affords excellent accommodations for a traveller. A German pilgrim had found his way here, a respectable, dull kind of man. One can fancy Greeks and Italians seeking with ardour the sacred land; but a heavy German with a pipe

in his mouth, travelling about the desert of St. John and the valley of Elah, is rather odd.

Having supped, and the air being chill, a vessel filled with charcoal was brought, and, having taken the usual last resource of a pipe and coffee, I lay down to rest in the small cell. But I had very nearly found my tomb in that wilderness; for one of the monks placed a quantity of fresh charcoal on the fire, during my sleep, and closing the door of the little cell after him, there was hardly a possibility of escaping destruction. In about two or three hours, I awoke in a state of utter weakness, and agony of mind, caused by the suffocating effects of the vapour, which had long filled the apartment. It was impossible to rise from the bed; and all consciousness being soon lost, my travels would have terminated, had not Michel happened to be awake in bed, with his candle burning in the adjoining cell, and hearing some faint cries, instantly run in, and carrying me into the air, by dashing torrents of cold water over me, brought life back again. Lives are frequently lost, in the East, from the same cause. In the convent cells, above all places, if the fathers wished to have a rich devotee out of the way, they have only to put a pan of

fresh charcoal beside him at night. In the church, a rich altar is erected on the spot where St. John was born, with an inscription over it.

The next morning we visited the wilderness; it is narrow, partially cultivated, and sprinkled with trees; the hills rise rather steep on each side; from that on the right, a small stream flows into the ravine below. The whole appearance of the place is romantic: and the prophet might have resided here, while exercising his ministry, with very little hardship; the neighbourhood still, no doubt, produces excellent honey, which is to be had throughout Palestine. High up the rocky side of the hill on the left, amidst a profusion of trees, is the cave or grotto of St. John. A fountain gushes out close by. When we talk of wildernesses, mountains, and plains in Palestine, it is to be understood that they seldom answer to the size of the same objects in more extensive countries; that they sometimes present but a beautiful miniature of them. It certainly deserved the term given by the Psalmist to the city, of being a "compact" country. The Baptist in his wild garb, surrounded by an assemblage of various characters, warning them to repentance in this wild

spot, must have presented a fine subject for the painter. In wandering over the country, we feel persuaded that its very scenery lent wings to the poetical and figurative discourses of its prophets and seers. Sublime and diversified, it is yet so confined and minute as to admit the deepest seclusion in the midst of a numerous population.

The monks in the convent are of the Catholic order, and have the advantage of all their brethren in point of situation and comfort; and yet nothing will induce these Franciscans to keep their habitations clean; the Greek and Armenian monasteries are palaces compared to them. The fathers are in general a very ignorant race of men, chiefly from the lowest orders of society. Their tables, except during Lent, are spread plentifully twice a day with several dishes of meat and wine; and so well do many of them thrive, that they would consider it banishment to be sent home to Europe to their friends. From the east end of the wilderness, you enter the famous valley of Elah, where Goliah was slain by the champion of Israel. It is a pretty and interesting-looking spot; the bottom covered with olive-trees. Its present appearance answers exactly to the description given in

Scripture; the two hills on which the armies stood, entirely confining it on the right and left. The valley is not above half a mile broad. Tradition was not required to identify this spot; Nature has stamped it with everlasting features of truth. The brook still flows through it in a winding course, from which David took the smooth stones; the hills are not precipitous, but slope gradually down; the vale is varied with banks and undulations, and not a single habitation is visible in it. From the scenes of some of the battles and positions of armies in those times, it is difficult to account for the mighty numbers stated as having fought; where could they be drawn up? The numerous kings of the Canaanites, and other people, who dwelt in the mountains, the hills, and towns, and fought against Israel, answered, probably, in power and force to the great sheiks of the Arabs of the present day, who dwell in and around Hebron, and to the south of it, and in the plains and mountains of Syria. The rich and beautiful plain of Esdralon, is the most spacious area in the country, and was the theatre of some battles; and the plain of Jericho is next in extent; but when we read that many hundreds of thousands of men fought around Mount Ephraim,

and other scenes in this country, one is tempted to wonder, how the confined valleys and open places one traverses, could have contained them. The numbers given, as some commentators observe, must have been enormously enlarged in transcribing, or translating from the original. If such multitudes were gathered together, hills, vales, and streams would disappear beneath their feet, and who would be left to bury the hundreds of thousands of the slain? The hosts of the Midianites or Arabs might truly be termed "as the sands on the sea shore," as an Arab camp with its camels, tents, and horses, looks ten times as numerous as it really is; but the armies of Judæa were all infantry, and villages, cottages, and towns must have been drawn into the vortex of battle, from the astonishing population of all parts of the land. It may be said, that their engagements were disorderly and without union, like those of other eastern nations; and being mostly undisciplined armies, called out *en masse* from their labours and avocations, this was probably the case; but the most close, deadly, and sustained combat, can only account for the tremendous slaughter.

On the same evening, we left St. John's, and returned to the city. One morning we

had an audience of the governor: the apartments of the palace we entered, were not handsomely furnished. How inviting the area of the temple, with its palm-trees, looked!—it was just beneath the palace windows; women often walk there, and it meets the eye from every eminence, as if to tantalize the unfortunate Christians, to whom it is forbidden. While we were with the governor, an elderly well-dressed Jew entered, and prostrated himself before the chief, touching the earth with his forehead, and presented him with a gold-flowered vase full of a rich sweetmeat; which his excellency commanded to be given to us to make use of. It was rather a degrading scene for the Jew. A loud noise being heard without, four or five soldiers entered, dragging in another, who was a Nubian, and had behaved ill and struggled violently. They held him by the arms and legs, while the governor seizing a kind of baton, with a knob of lead at the end of it, struck him eight or ten violent blows on the body, avoiding, however, the vital parts: the poor fellow cried out *amaun* in good earnest; it was not a very creditable exhibition. This governor is subject to the Pacha of Damascus. Scattered bodies of soldiers were arriving to join in the war; and we

had met a solitary Arab occasionally on horseback, with an immense lance, on his way to the city. At the south-east of Zion, in the vale of Jehoshaphat, they say the gardens of Solomon stood, and also on the sides of the hill adjoining that of Olivet. It was not a bad, though rather a confined site for them; the valley here is covered with a rich verdure, divided by hedges into a number of small gardens. A mean-looking village stands on the rocky side of the hill above. Not a single palm-tree is to be seen in the whole territory around, where once every eminence was covered with them. The roads leading to the city are bad, except to the north, being the route to Damascus; but the supplies of wood and other articles for building the temple, must have come by another way than the near and direct one from Jaffa, which is impassable for burdens of a large size, from the defiles and rocks amidst which it is carried; the circuitous routes by land from Tyre or Acre, were probably used. The Turk, who is chief of the guard that keeps watch at the entrance of the sacred church, waited on us two or three times; he is a very fine and dignified-looking man, and insured us entrance at all hours: which permission we availed ourselves of, to

pass another night amidst its hallowed scenes, with interest and pleasure but little diminished.

We chose a delightful morning for a walk to Bethany. The path leads up the side of Olivet, by the very way which our Saviour is said to have descended in his last entry into Jerusalem. At a short distance are the ruins of the village of Bethphage; and half a mile further is Bethany. The distance is about two miles from the city. The village is beautifully situated; and the ruins of the house of Lazarus are still shewn, and do credit to the good fathers' taste.

On the right of the road is the tomb of Lazarus, cut out of the rock. Carrying candles, we descended ten or twelve stone steps to the bottom of the cave. In the middle of the floor is the tomb, a few feet deep, and large enough to admit one body only. Several persons can stand conveniently in the cave around the tomb, so that Lazarus, when restored, did not, as some suppose, descend from a sepulchre cut out of the wall, but rose out of the grave, hewn in the floor of the grotto. The light that enters from above, does not find its way to the bottom; the fine painting in the Louvre of this resurrection was probably faithful in re-

presenting it by torch-light. Its identity cannot be doubted; the position of Bethany could never have been forgotten, and this is the only sepulchre in the whole neighbourhood. It is a delightful Sunday afternoon's walk to Bethany. After crossing the Mounts, the path passes along the side of a hill, that looks down into a wild and long valley, in which are a few scattered cottages. The view just above the village is very magnificent, as it embraces the Dead Sea, the valley and river of the Jordan, and its *embouchure* into the lake.

On the descent of Olivet, is shewn the spot where Christ wept over Jerusalem: tradition could not have selected a more suitable spot. Up this ascent David went, when he fled from Absalom, weeping. And did a Jew wish to breathe his last where the glory of his land and fallen city should meet his departing gaze, he would desire to be laid on the summit of the Mount of Olives.

The condition of the Jews in Palestine is more insecure and exposed to insult and exaction than in Egypt and Syria, from the frequent lawless and oppressive conduct of the governors and chiefs. These distant Pachalics are less under the control of the Porte; and in Egypt, the subjects of Mahmoud enjoy a

more equitable and quiet government than in any other part of the empire. There is little national feeling or enthusiasm among them; though there are some exceptions, where these exist in an intense degree. In the city they appear fearful and humbled, for the contempt in which they are held by the Turks is excessive, and they often go poorly clad to avoid exciting suspicion. Yet it is an interesting sight to meet with a Jew wandering with his staff in his hand, and a venerable beard sweeping his bosom, in the rich and silent plain of Jericho, on the sides of his native mountains, or on the banks of the ancient river Kishon, where the arm of the mighty was withered in the battle of the Lord. Did a spark of the love of this country warm his heart, his feelings must be exquisite: but his spirit is suited to his condition.

LETTER XVI.

We went one morning to see the hill of Engedi, distant about six miles from the city: the weather was beautiful, and the walk a very agreeable one. Engedi is low towards the north, but descends steep into the wilderness on the south, on which side of it, not far beneath the summit, is the cave where David and Saul reposed. It at first appears neither lofty nor spacious, but a low passage on the left leads into apartments where a party could easily remain concealed from those without. The family of an Arab resided in it at this time; the face of the hill around it corresponds to the description "he came to the rocks of the wild goats." On these rocks we sat down, and took a repast; and though a coarse one, no luxuries of the table could gratify like the magnificent view before and around us. In the distance in front, at the end of the wilder-

ness of Ziph, was the Dead Sea glittering in the sun-beams amidst its mournful shores.

The governor had continued to refuse us a guard, or permission to go to this famous spot, on account of the dangerous state of the roads, in consequence of the war of the Pachas.—We had no alternative: it was heart-breaking to quit Palestine without visiting the Dead Sea, and we resolved to attempt it by traversing the wilderness of Ziph on foot. Antonio, the guide from the city, protested the route was impracticable, not only on account of the sands and difficult tracts to be crossed, but the wild and lawless Arabs who infested it; and he refused to accompany us. The greatest loss was, however, the being deprived of the company of Mr. G., whose delicate state of health rendered so toilsome a route impossible. Antonio at last consented to make the attempt; yet our subsequent safety was entirely owing to Ibrahim, an Arab, whose family inhabited the cave, and who chanced to arrive as we were on the point of departing. On the assurance of being well rewarded, he agreed to be our guide.

Having disguised ourselves as well as we could, and consigned our money to G., who with his servant went to Bethlehem, we de-

scended the declivity of Engedi into the wilderness. It was about mid-day, and extremely hot. The way was very wild and interesting. The hills, over which it chiefly led, were in general covered with a coarse grass, and in some parts composed of sand; they were intersected by deep and narrow valleys or ravines, filled with a wild verdure, in the sides of which were several caverns. The place was well calculated to afford secure concealment from pursuit amidst its recesses, as it did to David when followed by Saul.

In a few hours, we came in sight of the convent of St. Saba. Its situation much resembled that of Sinai, being built amidst precipices, on the brink of a deep glen, at the bottom of which the Kedron flows, and surrounded with walls and buttresses of immense strength. With some difficulty the fathers admitted us, as we had rather a suspicious appearance; the heat beneath the rocks without was almost insufferable, and to our no small relief the convent gate was at last opened. A heretic deserves tenfold blame if he finds great fault with the Greek and Catholic fathers; although they do in general consign him over to a hopeless state hereafter, their convents are the greatest blessing and comfort earth can have

to offer him, in many situations, where else he would find nothing but a burning and thirsty desert. The church is a very ancient one, and adorned by the most grotesque figures of old male and female saints. You then step into a small paved court, in the middle of which is a dome, containing the tomb of the holy St. Saba: it is gilded and adorned in the usual tawdry manner of the Greeks. Michel, who was all things to all men, and in his long travels had learned the different forms of worship of almost every faith, was here full of crossings, mumblings, and devout looks, till the good fathers regarded him as a very devout son of the church. The Catholics used to do the same; he could get over the Turks very well, and talk solemnly of the prophet; and the Jews he delighted by conversing on the grandeur and riches they were to attain, as prophesied in the Scriptures, with which he was well acquainted.

Hence we passed by a flight of steps into a small church, hewn out of the rock: it formed one lofty and spacious apartment, in which divine service was sometimes performed by torch-light. The industry of the monks was very conspicuous; flights of stone steps conducted to several small terraces, one above the

other; and from below, they had conveyed a portion of the soil, and grew a variety of vegetables on these terraces for the use of the convent. About thirty monks of the Greek persuasion reside here. The monastery is supposed to have been founded about twelve hundred years ago, but the ascetic life was instituted earlier by St. Saba. In a dark and cavernous apartment, is a very extraordinary spectacle:—the opposite sides of the precipices are full of caves; a great number of Christians were slaughtered here by a body of soldiers sent by one of the caliphs: the skulls of those martyrs have been collected, and are piled in small pyramids in this chamber to the number of two or three thousand. Still ascending, for flights of steps and passages continue, you enter two or three delicious little cells, which might tempt a traveller to a month's residence at St. Saba. They were carpeted and cushioned in the oriental manner, and provided with a few books. We sat down and took some fruit and a kind of cordial kept there, and gazed on the prospect which the small window afforded, with infinite pleasure. The deep glen of the Kedron was far beneath, the wilderness on every side around, and the Dead Sea and its sublime shores full

in front, illumined by the setting sun. A narrow wooden tower, ascended by a flight of steps from the convent roof, overlooks the desert to a great distance. Here a monk is often stationed, to give notice of the approach of any of the wild Arabs who dwell there. As at Mount Sinai, these fellows come to the foot of the walls, and set up a loud clamour for bread. A large quantity of small brown cakes is always kept in the tower for these occasions, and they are thrown out of the window to the Arabs, who then take themselves off. A Greek, a hundred years of age, a fine old man, lived in an apartment of the building beneath the surface of the desert; he had passed fifty years of his life in travelling, and, being now quite blind, had lived several years in the monastery, to which he had given his property. He had earth from the shores of the Jordan brought him, and his only amusement was colouring, and drying in the sun, the shapes he had moulded them into, and then stamping Scripture figures on them, which were prized by the pilgrims. We walked for some time on the walls which hung over the precipitous glen; several foxes were peaceably running about at the bottom.

The sight of any thing that has life amuses

the good fathers: and we deeply deplored a circumstance that took place in a subsequent visit to St. Saba, through that unhappy German whom we had met at St. John's monastery, and who requested to accompany us. Being on the hills opposite the convent, we observed two very large birds, of the size of vultures, hovering about; the German shot one of them. The monks almost shed tears when he returned with it to the convent, and with real sorrow told us these birds had for a long time come every day near to the convent, till they at last became attached to them, and they considered the death of one as a bad omen.

We now adjourned to the convent parlour, a long low room, neatly furnished, and lighted by a single lamp; and supper was served in the Greek style. The conversation of the superior was very intelligent: it turned chiefly on the subject of the Dead Sea, of which he related some singular circumstances. About fifteen years ago, a human body, or what had the form of one, was discovered floating not far from the shore, and on taking it out, it was found to be encrusted all over with a thick and hard coating of bitumen and salt, caused, no doubt, by having lain a long while in the lake.

It happened to be the time of Easter, and the pilgrims, hearing of it, broke the body into innumerable pieces with infinite eagerness, believing it to be one of the ancient inhabitants of Sodom who had risen from the bottom. It was probably that of some unfortunate Arab who had fallen in. We now sought repose on the divan for two or three hours, and at midnight were awoke by the superior, who conducted us by a long passage to a window; through which making our exit, we descended by a ladder into the wilderness. To have proceeded during the day would have been little less than certain destruction, in consequence of being exposed to the observation and attacks of the Arabs. The height of the precipices for some time threw a gloom over our path, till we ascended a hill, and enjoyed a brilliant and unclouded moonlight. Our little party was only four in number, Ibrahim, the Arab; the young Antonio, who, though an excellent guide around the city, knew nothing of the paths he was now treading; Michel, who was in his element in a journey of this kind. We were all armed save Antonio. The night was charmingly cool, and the scenery wild and romantic, and nothing broke the utter stillness of the hour, save that once or

twice, some bird of the desert, startled by our footsteps, broke from her nest in the rocks above with a shrill cry, and, sweeping rapidly away, all was hushed again. Many of the hills amidst which we passed, were of white stone, and had a singular appearance in the moonlight.

On entering on a more open tract, Ibrahim, who led the way, made a full stop, where two paths opened to the right and left, and one, he said, was as bad as the other. It proved so, for in a quarter of an hour more, the Arab tents were before us, glimmering in the moonlight, and we were obliged to pass within two hundred yards of them. The dogs which these people, like those of Egypt, always have round their habitations, perceived us, or heard our footsteps, which were light and quick enough; for they set up a loud barking all through the camp. No Arab, however, awoke, which was not a little surprising, and with infinite pleasure we soon left the camp behind us. But in the course of twenty minutes we were confounded at seeing a line of tents again on the left. To retreat was worse than to advance, and we had nothing left but to keep the path at a small distance in front of them. To escape now seemed scarcely possi-

ble, as the loud barking of the dogs again warned the camp of our passage; yet, fortunate once more, we pressed on, and soon saw the tents lessening behind us. At last we reached the brink of the precipices which hang over the Dead Sea. The dawn was now appearing; and in the grey and cold light, the lake was seen far beneath stretched out to an interminable length, while the high mountains of Arabia Petræa opposite were shrouded in darkness. The descent of the heights was long and difficult; and ere we reached the bottom, the ruddy glow of morning was on the precipices over our heads. The line of shore at the bottom was about two hundred yards wide, and we hastened to the edge of the lake; but for several yards from it the foot sunk in a black mud, and its surface was every where covered with a greyish scurf, which we were obliged to remove before tasting it. There was not a breath of wind, and the waters lay like lead on the shore. Whoever has seen the Dead Sea, will ever after have its aspect impressed on his memory; it is, in truth, a gloomy and fearful spectacle. The precipices, in general, descend abruptly into the lake, and on account of their height it is seldom agitated by the winds. Its

shores are not visited by any footstep, save that of the wild Arab, and he holds it in superstitious dread. On some parts of the rocks, there is a thick sulphureous encrustation, which appears foreign to their substance; and in their steep descents, there are several deep caverns, where the benighted Bedouin sometimes finds a home. No unpleasant effluvia are perceptible around it, and birds are seen occasionally flying across. For a considerable distance from the bank the water appeared very shallow; this, with the soft slime of the bottom, and the fatigue we had undergone, prevented our trying its buoyant properties by bathing. A few inches beneath the surface of the mud are found those black sulphureous stones, out of which crosses are made and sold to the pilgrims. The water has an abominable taste, in which that of salt predominates; and we observed encrustations of salt on the surface of some of the rocks.

The mountains of the Judæan side are lower than those of the Arabian, and also of a lighter colour; the latter chain at its southern extremity is said to consist of dark granite, and is of various colours. The hills which branch off from the western end are composed entirely of white chalk: bitumen abounds most on the opposite shore. There is no outlet to this

lake, though the Jordan flows into it, as did formerly the Kedron, and the Arnon to the south. It is not known that there has ever been any visible increase or decrease of its waters. Some have supposed that it finds a subterraneous passage to the Mediterranean, or that there is a considerable suction in the plain which forms its western boundary. But this plain, confined by the opposing mountains, is partially cultivated, and produces trees, and a rude pasture used by the camels of the Bedouins; although in some parts sandy. It has never been navigated since the cities were engulphed; and it is strange that no traveller should have thought of launching a boat to explore it, the only way that promises any success. Mr. H. travelled completely round it, but the journey was a very tedious and expensive one, as it occupied several weeks, and he was obliged to take a strong guard. He made no discovery. The superior of St. Saba related that the people of the country who had crossed it on camels, in the shallower parts near the southern extremity, had declared to him they had seen the remains of walls and other parts of buildings beneath the water: this is an old tale, although the waters have the property of encrusting and preserving most

substances. Some stunted shrubs and patches of grass, a mere mockery of verdure, were scattered on the withered soil near the rocks. The golden and treacherous apples will be sought for in vain, as well as fish in the lake, which have also been asserted to exist. Its length is probably about sixty miles, and the general breadth eight: it might be six miles over, where we stood. The sun had now risen above the eastern barrier of mountains, and shone full on the bosom of the lake, which had the appearance of a plain of burnished gold. But the sadness of the grave was on it, and around it, and the silence also. However vivid the feelings are on arriving on its shores, they subside after a time into languor and uneasiness, and you long, if it were possible, to see a tempest wake on its bosom, to give sound and life to the scene. We had now passed some hours at the lake, much to the discontent of Ibrahim, who, pacing up and down the shore, and gazing at the caverns, and the summits of the cliffs, was incessantly talking of the probable approach of the Arabs, or their espying us from above. The passage over the wilderness of Ziph had given us a more complete and intimate view of the lake than the usual route to Jericho, which conducts only to its com-

mencement, at the embouchure of the Jordan. The narrow beach terminated about two hundred yards below, where the cliffs sank abruptly into the sea. We had now to walk to its extremity along the shores, and over the plain beyond to Jericho, in a sultry day; and we took a last look of this famous spot, to which earth perhaps can furnish no parallel. The precipices around Sinai are savage and shelterless, but not like these, which look as if the finger of an avenging God had passed over their blasted fronts and recesses, and the deep at their feet, and caused them to remain for ever as when they first covered the guilty cities.

Towards the extremity of the sea we passed, amidst hills of white chalk, and then entered on a tract of soft sand. Ascending a sand-hill that overlooked the plain, we saw Jericho, contrary to our hopes, at a great distance; and the level tract we must pass to arrive at it, was exposed to a sultry sun, without a single tree to afford us a temporary shade. The simile of the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land" was never more forcibly felt. We pursued our way over the dry and withered plain; the junction of the Jordan with the lake being seen far on the right. It was extremely

hot, and I had thoughtlessly thrown away all our fresh water, to fill the leathern vessel with that of the Dead Sea. The route afforded no kind moisture; springs or streams it was vain to hope for; and my poor attendants threw all the blame on me, and cursed from their hearts the infamous water that precluded the possibility of quenching their thirst. Once or twice I tried to drink it, but its abominable flavour was much worse than the most parching thirst. The plain was often intersected by deep and narrow ravines, the passing which added to our annoyance and fatigue.

It was near mid-day when we arrived at Jericho, and found our way into the single stone tower, called the castle of the governor. A fountain stood in the middle of the court, and we were ushered into his presence, in a sorry little apartment, through the sides and roof of which the sun and rain could both find their way. He was much astonished at seeing us, and swore he had never known the passage of the wilderness, unguarded and on foot, succeed before, except in the case of some pilgrims, several of whom, however, had been slain by the Arabs; but they had attempted it in the daytime. About thirty soldiers are maintained here to keep the Arabs in awe.

The situation is a wretched one, and the village of Jericho consists of about thirty miserable cottages: there are no ruins worthy of mention.

Dinner was now served up. We had anticipated some pleasant wine and savoury viands; and having formed a circle of half a dozen round a low table on the floor, the party including two or three officers, a huge wooden vessel was placed amongst us. It contained not the exquisite *baklou*, prepared expressly for the Sultan's palate, or famed cakes of roses of Damascus; but a mass the aspect of which defied investigation. After a mouthful or two, however, it was found to be composed of warm cakes of bread, baked on the hearth, and broken into small pieces, hot water and melted-butter being poured over it: it was stirred about well by the hands of one of the faithful. A few mouthfuls were devoured by us with good grace, as we expected another *entrée* quickly. The Turks took enormous handfuls with extreme deliberation; and his excellency the governor, having a fancy that a hard substance, bolted into the mouth, had a higher and more prolonged relish, compressed his handful with some skill into a large ball, while the moister ingredients streamed over

his fingers. The wooden bowl being removed, we looked long and anxiously, but no viand came more, and water only was permitted to dignify this repast.

We were too much fatigued to visit the Jordan this day; but in the evening we walked to the fountain at the foot of the mountain Quarantina. It has ever been venerated as the same that the prophet Elisha purified, "whose waters were bitter, and the ground barren." It is a beautiful fountain, and, gushing forth with a full rapid stream, falls into a large and limpid pool, whence several streams flow over the plain. The fruitfulness of the neighbourhood, which is covered with a rich verdure and many trees, and well cultivated, arises chiefly from the vicinity of this celebrated fountain, the waters of which are remarkably sweet. The "City of Palms" cannot now boast of one of those beautiful trees around it. The plain, about six miles wide, and inclosed by ranges of mountains, as far as Tiberias, a distance of three days' journey, has a rich soil and delightful aspect, the Jordan's course through it being perfectly straight. At present it is visited and dwelt in only by the Arab tribes. The rocky mountain Quarantina, that rises near the fountain,

is pointed out as the scene of the Saviour's temptation in the wilderness; on what authority it is difficult to guess.

The next day, accompanied by some of the governor's soldiers as a guard, we rode to the Jordan. About four miles across, the plain brought us to the banks, which were adorned with acacia and tamarind trees, and many shrubs and wild flowers. The sight of this verdure in such a spot was very pleasing. The river rushed by in a full and rapid torrent; its force would have swept away man and horse: this was the effect partly of the rains. It looked rather discoloured from the same cause: its taste was perfectly sweet, and the stream was little below the surface of its banks. The soldiers were restless, and anxious to be gone; for which there was no apparent cause: but they are fond of enlarging on danger from the Arabs. During the summer season the quantity of water in the river must be greatly diminished, but it never now overflows its banks. Tradition has not preserved the spot where the Israelites crossed; and, what is strange, it is impossible to find out from Christian or Arab in what part Mount Nebo is to be found.—The width of the river was about twenty yards, and it appeared very deep.

We returned to Jericho, and endeavoured to amuse the evening in the governor's desolate tower; but the resources were very scanty: and as he is seldom honoured by strangers' visits, he makes them pay handsomely when they do come. The rain fell in torrents in the night, and found its way through his excellency's roof, and fell in profusion on our beds; and it was only after one or two experiments on different sites in the chamber, that we could close our eyes without being deluged.

The next day, attended by a few horsemen from the castle, we set out on our return to Jerusalem. It was a comfortless and pitiless journey, leading over a succession of dreary hills, far unlike the route through the fine and romantic wilderness of Ziph. The rain beating heavily in our faces, and swelling every mountain torrent, compelled us to proceed at a slow rate. Poor Ibrahim walked beside the horses the whole way, and looked as if he would rather have been in his native desert. At last we wound up the ascent to Bethany, descended the hills, and, crossing the bridge over the Kedron, entered the city again.—Father Giuseppé received us with uplifted hands and looks; not quite so interesting as the sight of two or three warm dishes, attend-

ed by a good bottle of wine, which were quickly set before us, and made some atonement for penance at Jericho. Ibrahim also got accommodated, and, for the first time in his life, feasted in a monkish cell, and seemed so much taken with it, that it was doubtful if he would not have forsaken his cave at Engedi, and turned Catholic, to have tasted such luxury always. The governor was much enraged with the poor fellow for undertaking to guide us on the journey, and threatened to punish him; we begged him off, however, and sent him home to his cavern, well rewarded.

LETTER XVII.

ONE morning we paid a visit to Procopius, a Greek bishop, who received us with great politeness. The convent is remarkably clean and neat, though the number of monks is not very large; it contains numerous apartments for the accommodation of the Greek pilgrims. The jealousy between these people and the Catholics is very great: the latter, however, possess the monasteries at Bethlehem and Nazareth, which must bring them in a pretty considerable income; but the former have lately made the most alarming encroachments in the Holy Church of the Sepulchre, where the Pope's empire, like that of the Sultan, is hastening to decay. The chapel, erected on the tomb of the Virgin Mary, in the valley, they divide between them.

A procession of the Catholic priests, accompanied by several pilgrims, took place at one

in the morning; and we engaged the evening before to be of the party. There was no moonlight, and, as the path was rather narrow and devious, a number of torches were carried. The object of this procession was to visit the tomb of Lazarus; but as many other sacred places were comprised in the tour, several hours were necessary for its accomplishment.

It was quite dark, and about an hour past midnight, when the procession issued out of the gate of St. Stephen, and descended the side of Mount Zion in good order. The pilgrims were barefooted, and marched slowly and solemnly after the priests, who chanted as they went along. The party stopped at the Garden of Gethsemane, with signs of much grief and trouble, and sang and prayed, and then ascended Mount Olivet, over the beautiful side of which the torches cast a doubtful and glimmering light. The pilgrims were men of different ages and countries, but all discovered marks of the deepest reverence and impassioned feeling. To the priests it was too much a matter of habit and routine to excite their feelings beyond the usual level.

The procession halted again on the top of the Mount of Olives, endeared by so many

sacred and glorious remembrances, and, passing by the ruins of Bethphage, at last arrived at the rock, in which is hewn out the tomb of Lazarus. Every one descended into it, and the excavation was scarcely able to contain the whole number. The narrow flight of steps leading down into it, allows a very partial light, even in the daytime; but now the sacred spot was vividly illuminated by the number of torches held beneath. The flame that waved in the open air as they marched along, now burnt clear and steady. On the floor of the sepulchre stood all the priests, while the pilgrims hung round and bent over them with the utmost eagerness and interest, to catch a glimpse of the tomb where the body of Lazarus had lain. It is about the size of the human form, and is hollowed out in the middle of the rocky floor. The chant was here of the most solemn and impressive kind, of the victory gained over death and the grave by the power of the cross, and of the resurrection to life eternal. Save the voices of the pilgrims and the priest, all without in the village of Bethany was hushed in the deep silence of night.

When the party left the sepulchre, the daylight was already breaking; and returning

slowly by the same route, the gate of St. Stephen admitted them again, as the rising sun began to crimson the East.

The road to the Dead Sea is no longer crowded, as formerly, with pilgrims of various nations, travelling to Jericho and the Jordan, to bathe in the sacred river. This journey is generally performed on foot, and is sufficiently difficult and toilsome, especially to the old and infirm. Many of these poor enthusiasts finish their earthly course in the Holy City, dying with the peculiar satisfaction of leaving their bones there.

Taking Antonio, the young guide, with us from the city, we went one morning to the place to which tradition has given the name of Michmash, where the troops of Saul, and afterwards the numerous army of the Philistines, were encamped, when the Hebrews "hid themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in pits." The two latter designations answer extremely well to the present appearance of the country; but of thickets and bushes there are none to be seen. A succession of low and barren hills leads up to the higher one of Michmash, which commands a fine view of the wilderness of St. John, the mountain and ruins of the palace of the Mac-

cabees, and the hill and town of Bethlehem. There are several caves on the spot, one of which contains a fine spring of water, to which we descended, and drank of it with pleasure, for the day was extremely warm. While seated there enjoying the splendid scene around, a number of women of the country approached, singing in a wild and not unmusical strain: they walked in a kind of procession, and, saluting us very civilly, passed gaily on.

The aspect of the country around this spot is exceedingly barren; not a vestige now remains of the numerous woods which formerly covered it. Not far from hence probably stood the wood of Ephraim, in which was fought the battle of Absalom against his father David, when, it is said, "the wood devoured more people than the sword." The territory of Ephraim, which is a short distance hence, presents now only a succession of small and narrow valleys; very few of them have any cultivation; they are divided by barren and stony hills.

Few people were met with now on the roads in travelling through Palestine; the ways were generally solitary and silent. A poor and wearied pilgrim might now and then be seen

dragging his weary steps towards the sacred city; but more frequently individuals, or detached parties, were encountered, belonging to one or other of the hostile Pachas, and proceeding towards the scene of action.

We were joined in our route one day by a traveller from Jaffa, a native of that place, which was under the dominion of Acre. He hoped to get into the city under our countenance, and had advanced a few steps within the gate of Bethlehem, when he was rudely pulled back and questioned by the guard, who without any ceremony clapped him in prison.

During the Easter week, a funeral took place at the Catholic convent. The body was brought and laid in the chapel, attended by a number of men and women; the latter were dressed in white. The organ played, the funeral chant was sung, and the whole service was conducted impressively and with decency, and without any of the clamour that so often attends oriental funerals. The body was then borne to the burial without the walls, where also the other churches have theirs. Here they come sometimes to mourn. A female, with part of her robe drawn over her head, or veiled, was seen seated by the tombs of her

relatives on the summit of Mount Moriah, or along its sides, just beneath the walls. But there are few trees to spread their shadow over the mourner, few associations of natural beauty to lend a kind of charm to grief. The Armenian, the Copt, and other Christians, bring their dead, where not a spot can be found, but the ashes of a devoted people repose beneath, from the Valley of Slaughter to the Valley of the King, which, in the words of prophecy, should be filled with the bodies of the slain.

The modern sepulchres of the unfortunate Jews are scattered all around. The declivities of Zion and Olivet are covered with small and ill-shaped stones, disposed with little order: these are the tombs of their fathers. In this way, with little decency and without honour, must their heads also be laid in the earth that was once their own blessed inheritance. "How is the beauty departed from Zion, and the glory from her children! they have sunk beneath the hand of their oppressor."

No feeling of patriotism kindles in the bosom of a Jew; no elevating remembrance of the past glories of his country; his attachments are all intimately connected with his own fancied self-interest or aggrandisement. If he

wishes ardently to breathe his last near the Valley of Jehoshaphat, it is because he believes he shall be judged there at the resurrection, and that all other people will be excluded. This is not an unfrequent feeling among them, and has induced many to exile themselves from their homes, and spend their remaining days at no great distance from the revered spot. In the family of a rich Jew where we resided a few days, whose family and attendants were very numerous, the mountains of Samaria and other scenes of ancient victories were in view, where "the arm of the mighty was withered in the battle of the Lord;" but it was useless to speak of these things, they cared not for them, but spoke with eagerness of the future days, which could not be far distant, when the promised Deliverer should come, and trample all their enemies under their feet.

The only marks we met with of true sensibility and enthusiasm for the memorable scenes amidst which they lived, were displayed by a Catholic monk and an aged Greek. The former had been an inmate for many years of the convent at Bethlehem; he was bent nearly double with age, but his countenance was fine

and his eye full of fire. He followed us, leaning on his staff, on the lofty terrace of the monastery, which commands one of the finest views in the East, and pointed out with impassioned feeling each holy and illustrious spot. "It was there," pointing to the valley beneath, "where the shepherds beheld the heavenly hosts who announced the birth of the Redeemer; or, still nearer, where the fountain gushed out at the foot of the hill, that David desired to drink of, and his mighty men broke through, and brought him of the water." The other priests smiled at the officiousness and ardour of the old man, who seemed to have been born for any thing but a monk. The Greek lived in the middle of a wilderness, old and infirm; his habitation was humble, and he was scarcely able to move a few steps from it. All his near relatives were dead, and he was left, as it were, alone in the world. It was seldom that a stranger's step came near him, and still rarer that of an enemy: for what had he to lose? His features brightened with joy as he received us and gave us his blessing. Unlike every other Greek we met with, he asked no questions respecting his native country, or the war; but spoke only of the land

where he lived, and where he had come to die.

Having been so much delighted with our first visit to the monastery of St. Saba in the wilderness, we resolved to make a second. A pilgrim, who had come from Europe to see the Holy Sepulchre, begged hard to accompany us, as it was the only opportunity he could possibly have of making the journey. Having procured horses, we left Jerusalem early in the morning, without servants or guide. It was a dull and cheerless day, and the sky was covered with dark clouds. We passed down the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and crossed the stream that flows from the fountain of Siloam. On the right, beneath a large sycamore, is the spot where the prophet Hezekiah is said to have been sawn asunder. A small and verdant mound, about six feet in height, extends round the tree, and was the scene of the martyrdom. It is seldom that the vicinity of trees is selected in Palestine as the theatre of miracles; rocks and gloomy caverns are generally the favourite spots. But around this spot, as well as the tomb of Zacharias, and the magnificent cavern of the Prophet of the Lamentations, there is no memento, no chapel, not even a crucifix to draw the attention and

enthusiasm of the pilgrims. This would not answer the purpose of the monks.

The tombs of David and Solomon, of Abraham and Isaac at Hebron, are covered with Turkish mosques, and the foot of the pilgrim dares not approach them. Absalom has his pillar; David the cave and the fountain to perpetuate his memory; but Solomon and his glory are honoured with no vestige or monument—his reservoirs only are pointed out. The wretched village of Lazarea stands where the many palaces of his mistresses formerly stood; and the valley where his gardens bloomed beneath, still offers a verdant and pleasant promenade.

We now followed the narrow and romantic valley that divides the opposite chain of mountains, and is watered by the only stream around the city. Its murmur, from the great rarity of water, was delightful to the ear, and two or three cottages, around which are some trees, stand on its banks. The dreariness of the way was increased by the rain that now began to fall. As we looked back on the city, the walls of which terminated the view up this silent valley, we were struck by its gloomy and desolate aspect. It may be in part the effect of imagination; but when a beautiful

and cloudless day lights up its deep valleys, rocks, and lonely tombs, its appearance is in the highest degree romantic and striking. But in a dark and stormy day, when the rains pour down the mountains, and the winds moan along the forsaken places, they seem to bring a warning of sorrow and affliction yet to come.

We now wound our way among the high and chalky cliffs towards the wilderness; the path was so rugged that we could not proceed very rapidly, and it was uncheered by the view of a single passenger. A young Greek monk, who was sent by the superior of the convent to attend on us, afforded a strong contrast to the rugged aspect and garb of some others of the party. His chief employment in the monastery was to attend on its chief, and not much of his time was engaged in prayers and chants. His countenance was fair and feminine, and his thick raven hair fell in long and luxuriant curls down his back; the monastic life had not thinned his cheeks, or given them the sallow hue of so many of his brethren. He was very gay and animated, and appeared to enjoy the excursion extremely.

The rain ceased, and the sky began to clear ere we arrived at the convent; and our entrance was no longer attended with difficulty,

as on our first visit. The good fathers recognised us instantly, and gave us a cordial reception. The few stores of the convent were instantly put in requisition to supply us with a dinner: tolerably good wine, a luxury denied us before, as it was then fast-time, made its appearance.

Were I condemned to be exiled to a monastic abode, the wild and romantic solitude of St. Saba should be my choice. The torrent of the Kedron no longer pours through the glen beneath, but its sides are formed of fine and bold precipices, around the steeps of which hang a variety of shrubs and stunted trees of the desert. No sounds but the cries of the eagle and a few other birds are heard here; and the most magnificent spectacle is the rising and setting of the sun on the Dead Sea and its fearful shores.

During the feast of Easter, many pilgrims find their way to this convent from Jerusalem, to worship at the tomb of the holy St. Saba, who must have been truly a self-denying man, and less comfortably lodged than his successors.

The monastery has not much the appearance of a religious retreat; its immensely strong and lofty towers frown over hill and val-

ley, and are seen at a great distance. The Arab often casts a wishful eye at them, and would gladly set his foot in the clean and quiet cells within. Poor Ibrahim, the Bedouin, who lived with his family in the cave of Engedi, and who accompanied us in our midnight walk to the Dead Sea, liked his night's lodging in the cell wonderfully better than in his own dark cave, and ate with avidity of the fine white bread and various viands set before him. The fine cakes of bread made by the monks are objects of peculiar desire to the Arabs, as they so seldom eat meat, and are careless whether it is camel or beef; their coffee and their bread-cakes are their chief sustenance; the latter are coarse and dark, and cannot vie in flavour or aspect with those of the convents. Here, too, they shew the same art and foresight as in the wilderness of Sinai —they never intercept the supplies of flour sent from Jerusalem to the monastery of St. Saba, choosing rather to wait till it has been manufactured into the above-named white loaves, when they demand their tithe with loud clamour and infinite good-will.

Ibrahim could certainly not boast of many comforts in his mountain-abode; his residence there probably kept the pilgrims away. On

our entrance we found a swarm of children around their mother, who, a dark Arab woman (a relative, probably) told us, had just added another inmate to the cave where Saul and David met. No light cheered the obscure retreats of the cavern, that seemed the abode of poverty and wretchedness. Is it any wonder these men are tempted to plunder the traveller and the pilgrim! But cruelty is not in their nature, and the fidelity and caution for our safety which this poor Arab shewed throughout the journey could not be exceeded.

We walked out during the evening on the hills around the convent, and were shewn the caves where so many of the saints of old resided. This wilderness of Ziph, or Maon, was a favourite spot of theirs, as it afforded them an excellent retreat from persecution, and is surrounded by many sacred and impressive scenes. Yet nothing could present a more awful and funereal aspect than these retreats—deep and dreary valleys, hemmed in on each side by precipices so high that the sun sinks untimely behind them, where at night, or by a partial moonlight, imagination may easily conjure up a thousand fantastic shapes, from their white chalky summits, rent asunder as if by a convulsion. The caverns, once the abode

of so many martyrs, may be said to be innumerable, and are many of them in situations apparently inaccessible—in the very sides of the precipices, more than a hundred feet above the bed of the torrent. No tree, shrub, or even spring of water, gladdens the desolate scene: the curse of the Dead Sea seems to have reached even here; and many of the bones of that army of Christians slaughtered in the caves, remain to tell how nobly Christianity could sustain men who lived so holily, and died with joy in this mournful region. Some of the distant hills to the right, the sides of which were covered with a rude pasture, offered a contrast to other parts of the wilderness. We had passed these before on the way from Engedi, and seen several shepherds tending their flocks: their dress was scanty and their appearance wild, but their pipes at intervals played a strain, not very musical, but it appeared most sweet and welcome in such a solitude.

The sun had set, and the air already began to grow cool, when we again returned to the convent through its huge and massive gate, which is secured with immense bands of iron. On the right, at a short distance, rises a strong and isolated tower, as if the monastery, eleva-

ted several hundred feet from the valley beneath, and environed by ramparts of rocks and mountains, stood in need of any additional defence.

We formed a numerous party in the parlour round the low table on the floor; the chief of the fathers did the honours with great good will, took his glass of wine, and conversed with great animation. Like the superior of the convent of Mount Sinai, his heart seemed to feel relief in the society of strangers, and in the tidings of other lands, of his own dear country in particular. What a marked difference between the Greek and the Italian monk! On the mind of the latter his country has no hold, excites no passion or sensibility; but the church, the saints, and the pope—on these he will dwell everlastingly. But the Greek—his first question is of Greece—her war, and successes, and sufferings; for these he will forget St. Saba, Santa Catherina, his conviction that St. Peter never was at Rome, and all. The venerable chief of Sinai, how his eye lightened, and his bosom warmed, as he talked of his country! This he never forgot to do two hours at least every day, even in the depths of the desert, where he had been for so many years isolated. And at St. Saba, the poor

monks crowded round our servants to hear the latest intelligence of the war.

The small parlour of the convent was now brightly illumined by several lamps, and coffee was handed round. We had not now the prospect of starting from our slumbers at midnight, as before, to continue a doubtful march, but enjoyed the tranquillity of our situation. The evening chant of the good fathers, rather nasal than melodious, was heard ascending from the small but ancient chapel. The moon had risen, and cast a soft yet clear light on every strange and varied scene around. The deep glen of the Kedron beneath was wrapped in gloom, with the many and extensive caverns in its sides; but the precipices above had now lost great part of their terrors, and lifted their mountain peaks so majestically and high, as if they scorned the loveliness of the night that rested on them.

Few objects could ever present a more stern and impressive aspect than this monastery, as it stood tower aboye tower, with walls and buttresses of immense strength, and of a light yellow stone, on the very edge of those fearful descents; and so calm and hushed every thing around, undisturbed by even a breath of wind! No wanderer's footstep broke the silence of the desert; the Arab only had not gone to his

rude tent, for he fears not at times to prowl in the shadows of the night; while the sentinel still continued on his watch-tower above, to look out over the wilderness, the fathers relieving each other in this task. What a situation for some of those wild and memorable events with which the land was once filled, and of which this convent would have been a fitting theatre, had it been other than the abode of quiet and senseless monks! Its appearance belies it, for you might swear, on approaching, that it was the abode of some bold and ruthless crusader, who had come to exterminate the enemies of the cross. The traveller in Palestine cannot refrain from often recalling with impassioned feelings, the days when chivalry, with all its charms, was spread over its faded yet illustrious scenes; when the wilderness echoed with the wandering step of the noble knight, who had left his own land to seek glory there; when the minstrel's song and the harp's wild tones were heard even in the desolate valley, or on the mount where the armies of Israel triumphed; or the lake's cold and dreary shore was lighted up by the watch-fires of the brave crusaders, who beheld every scene with enthusiastic delight, and thought it recompense enough to bleed and

die on the earth that had been hallowed by the steps of the Redeemer!

It now grew late; the fathers took their leave, and left us to our repose on the soft cushions, on which we slept soundly till the rays of the sun, entering at the small windows of the divan, summoned us to rise and quit this abode of the desert.

The convent contains several articles both curious and valuable. A few of the cells are adorned with small figures of saints, very ancient and richly ornamented; but they are not held in such high veneration as to be preferred to what the monks find highly useful in this country, a little money. We purchased a St. Joseph, and a very good-looking saintess, done in filagree work of gold, and a few articles in curious workmanship of wood, brought from Germany by some of the pilgrims, who presented them to the convent as the best gifts in their power. It is amusing to see the look of surprise and dislike assumed by the good fathers when offered money in return for their hospitality; the right hand is generally placed on the breast, and the other gently waved as if to forbid the approach of the tempting metal. "My dear brother, what is this for?" said the chief of the Jerusalem convent; "our

hospitality is given freely for the love of Him whom we serve;" but the good superior of St. Saba's eyes sparkled with joy as the round dollars rested on his palm; for his lonely convent seldom received so large a party. Yet of what use could the money have been to him, except to procure a few more luxuries for his cell, such as fine Cyprus wine, cordials, &c.? These we found more than once make their appearance, in these habitations, from a small and unsuspicious cupboard.

It was a lovely morning, uncheered however by "charm of earliest birds;" the sun was bright and cloudless on the hills and valleys; the good fathers placed before us a substantial breakfast, and we then bade them adieu, followed by a sufficient number of their blessings. The massive gate, with its huge bolts and clasps of iron, was once more unclosed. Few indeed are the times in the course of the year that it receives the wanderer, whose prayers and entreaties for entrance are often unavailing, when he is compelled to seek shelter under the canopy of the rocks around. So far from human resort, so gloomy and unassailable, and having within its walls caverns, dungeons, and heaps of skeletons, although of saints, it looked like the domain

of Despair, in the beautiful romance of the Pilgrim's Progress. Had Bunyan, with his powers of painting, but set his foot in Palestine, how truly and vividly would every scene have opened from his pen! every other might then have been laid hopelessly down.

The path over the wilderness was much more lively and agreeable than on the former day; and we welcomed once more, after a ride of several hours, the walls of the sacred city, as they were seen at some distance at the end of the valley. The day was sultry; and as we passed the small wood of olive-trees on the right of the stream from Siloam, we beheld a party of Armenians regaling beneath its shade. They were well-dressed men, and their horses were fastened to the trees beside them; they invited us very pressingly to alight and join them at their repast. It was rather tempting, for the weather was oppressively hot, and the rivulet beautifully clear, with the cold collation and bottle of wine laid in the shade on the green bank; we declined the invitation, however, and pressed on towards the city, which we soon entered by the gate of Ephraim.

The close and prison-like appearance of the streets around the convent, the mean and

confined view, and the suspicious and dejected air of the few passengers in the streets, appeared oppressive and repelling after the free air and boundless prospects we had left behind. To celebrate the feast of Easter, but few pilgrims had arrived in comparison of former years; yet the ceremonies customary at this period were strictly observed. Olivet and Bethany were visited every day, and the small chapel on the summit of the former attracted the chief veneration. The print of the foot of the Redeemer, the last step that he left on earth, was often kissed with the highest devotion and with tears, as well as the scene of the last passion in the garden beneath, where the marks of the falling drops are yet left on the rocks.

The ceremony of the holy light, that took place during Easter, is, however, the greatest imposition practised on the poor pilgrims.—On the floor of the rotunda stood every one who had arrived—not one was absent, or would have suffered any thing save mortal sickness to detain him from this wonderful scene. It took place at night, the lights were all extinguished, the vast area with the dome was wrapped in profound darkness, and the whole assembly, full of expectation, preserved

a deep silence. The priests were within the sepulchre, busily employed in preparing the miracle. The eyes of all present, Greeks, Catholics, Copts, and Armenians, were intently fixed on the tomb, whence the light was to burst forth, as a token of the divine approbation, and that joy, light, and immortality, were sprung from the darkness of the grave. This was the consummation of all: the processions round the sacred spot, the sprinkling of the incense, the tears and prayers, were all preparatory to this great token, which was to seal the joy and complete the consolation of every pilgrim. On a sudden the light burst in a blaze from within the chamber of the sepulchre, and streamed on the multitude of devoted Christians around.... What a moment for a painter to have caught—from the expression of doubt, anxiety, and hope, that of wild and enthusiastic joy! The shouts and cries that instantly arose were actually stunning, accompanied with clapping and waving of hands; each one crying out in his own language, many on their knees praying fervently and loudly, and all hailing with ecstasy the light, the holy, the miraculous light! It did not deceive them; for it came vivid and unfading from the sepulchre, and each eye gazed on it with

intenseness and passion, as if it was the light that was to cheer for them "the dark valley of the shadow of death," and take from the grave its fearfulness. The men, who were by far the more numerous part of the audience, were boisterous and half frantic with their joy; but the women expressed it more by tears and silent clasping of hands. At last, when the priests thought the scene had lasted long enough, the light was extinguished from within, and the pilgrims, nearly exhausted with their fervour, but all delighted, gradually dispersed.

You would expect to find that the synagogue of the Jews was in some measure worthy of their capital; but, like the Christians, they appear to avoid every appearance of ornament or comfort without. Their chief place of worship is a sorry and mean-looking building, to which you descend by a flight of steps. It is situated in the midst of the Jewish quarter, and is supported, however, by some ancient pillars.

The most striking ceremony of this people is one which sometimes occurs without the walls of the city, when they assemble to celebrate the festival of the tombs of their fathers.—They are not allowed to do this without the per-

mission of the Turkish governor, which they are obliged to obtain by the bribe of a handsome sum of money. The whole Jewish population gather together in the valley of Jehoshaphat, which is their favourite burying-place; because there they are to be finally judged. The ceremony is conducted with great decency, and is without any clamour or noise. They sit for some time in silence on the tombs of their fathers, with sad countenances, and their eyes fixed on the ground. Men, women, and children, are all assembled, and it is an interesting spectacle, to see this fallen people mourning in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, where their kings have offered sacrifices; where their prophets have uttered their divine inspirations; and where they believe the trump of the archangel shall finally wake them to judgement. But even this consolation of assembling round the ashes of their fathers, they are obliged to purchase with money. It is well their sensibilities are blunted, and their spirit utterly bowed, or else the draught that is given them to drink would have too much bitterness, and the iron rod of the oppressor would enter into their very soul.

LETTER XVIII.

We had resolved next to visit Damascus but various obstacles were thrown in the way by the governor, who considered the route too dangerous, in consequence of the war between the two pachas. Leaving the Holy City then, after a stay of about three weeks, we retraced the mountain path to Ramla, and after passing a night at the Catholic convent, arrived at Jaffa on the following morning. Signor Damiani once more received us hospitably, and, fortunately, we found a boat in the port about to sail for Acre the next morning. We accordingly embarked, and after being out all night, reached Acre the subsequent forenoon.

This town is at present the strongest in Syria, being encompassed with a new wall. As we were obliged to spend several days here to wait for an opportunity of going to Damascus, we had full opportunity of observing the effects

of the war between the two chiefs. Three or four human heads were frequently brought into the town in the course of the day, cut off by the pacha's troops from some of the enemy's stragglers, or, in default of them, from the poor peasants. This war was occasioned by mere private feuds, and unauthorized by the Porte.

The young Pacha of Acre, who acted in a most rash and ungovernable way, opposed with success the stronger chief of Damascus by means of the mountain troops of Lebanon. He resolved on cutting a deep and wide trench all round the town, effecting a communication with the sea on each side: which was not impracticable, as the point on which it stood advanced considerably into the sea. But the trench, if executed, could not avail in any way for the defence of the town, as it was more than a mile distant, and an attacking army would find it easy to pass it in the night. But the pacha believed the place would be impregnable if the water flowed all round it; and to effect this object, he made the whole population go out and work from morning till evening.

The soldiers were seen going about the streets, and compelling by blows the idlers

they met, to go and dig at the trench. The town was nearly emptied; and on walking one day to the spot, we found all ranks of people, rich men, merchants, and domestics, mingled with the poorer classes, working up to their chins in the ditch, each with his wicker basket in his hand, which they filled with the earth, and then threw its contents above the bank. Some others were employed in digging, and overseers were set over the whole: rations of bread and water were served out at mid-day, and at sun set they were allowed to enter the city. We walked out a short distance, and stood beneath some palms to view their return. The better order of people came first, the poorer followed; amongst both were seen several noseless and earless people, who had been the objects of Djezzar's cruelty. The mountaineers who had been compelled to come and assist in the work, came last, singing their mountain songs with great cheerfulness. The gates were closed on them, till they should be summoned to resume their task the next day.

This prince, Selim, is the second in succession from Djezzar. The instances of the latter's cruelty are innumerable. He seemed to take a supreme delight in destroying; yet he has built the handsomest mosque and

bathing-house in Syria. Beside the former are a quantity of fine palms, and a beautiful fountain. He was a rigid Musulman, and never failed to attend the mosque twice a day, and died in his bed at last in peace, at the age of eighty years.

The history of his prime minister, the Jew, is tragical and interesting. This Israelite was an uncommonly clever man, and so well versed in all the affairs of the province, as to be invaluable to Djezzar, who cut off his nose and ears, however, for no reason on earth, but still retained him his prime minister. Suleiman, his successor, who governed only two years, could not do without the Jew's services; and on the present Pacha Selim's accession, he stood in as high confidence as ever. "In those days," said Anselac, the Jewish merchant, who was bewailing to us the fate of his friend, "no Turk dared to turn up his nose at a Jew in the streets of Acre, or discover the least insult in his manner; but the face of things was changed at last."

The unfortunate Israelite had served Selim for some time with his usual integrity and talent, when his enemies, taking advantage of the young Pacha's ignorance and weakness, persuaded him that his minister, from his long

intercourse with the Porte, and deep experience in intrigue, would probably be induced to maintain a secret correspondence, and detail his master's exactions. The next time the minister appeared, he was ordered to confine himself to his house, and not appear again at the palace till sent for. He obeyed, trembling and astonished, and remained in safety secluded amidst his family and friends.

But the habit of ruling had taken too strong a hold on his mind: this quiet and inactive life pressed heavily on the old man's spirits, and he resolved to venture to go to court again. He came and prostrated himself before the Pacha, and humbly demanded to know what his offences were, and why he had been deprived of his office. Selim was very angry at seeing him again, and bade him instantly begone. The advantage he had thus given his enemies over him, was not lost. A few evenings after, he was at supper with his family, when one of his servants told him two messengers from the palace were below: he instantly knew their errand, and tranquilly retiring to another apartment, requested a short time to say his prayers, and was then strangled by the mutes, and his body thrown into the sea.

"I was returning," said Anselac, "on the

following evening from Sidon, and saw a body on the shore, partly out of the water; and on coming to the spot, found it was that of my friend and countryman, the minister, of whose cruel death I had not heard." This poor man removed with his family to Beirout, under the Consul's protection, as he thought the Pacha might take it into his head to serve him in like manner, or strip him of his property.

Djezzar was called the butcher, partly from a small axe he carried at his sash of an exquisite edge; and he sometimes amused himself by coming behind a culprit, or an innocent person, (it mattered little which,) and, hitting him a blow with it on the back of the neck, putting an instant period to his cares. During one of Djezzar's journeys to guard over the deserts the caravän of Mecca, his nephew, Suleïman, found access to his seraglio; the chief, on his return, discovering the circumstance, drew his hanger, and stabbed several of his wives with his own hand. The Porte often attempted to take him off, but the various Capidgé Bashis sent for that purpose were none of them suffered to enter his presence, as the death-warrant of the Sultan, if exhibited in presence of the offender, is never resisted even by his own guards. He very

civilly received all their kind inquiries after his health and the welfare of his province, and took care to have them taken off snugly by poison.

Having at last procured an excellent guide, who undertook to conduct us by a circuitous route to Damascus, we quitted Acre. Travelling over the extensive plain, we came in the evening to Ebilené, a village delightfully situated on an eminence, on the sides of which a number of sheep were feeding. We took possession of a large and lofty apartment, the khan of the village, and taking a pipe and coffee, than which nothing is more refreshing after a journey, we waited patiently for our supper. After a good while, this made its appearance; as usual, two or three dishes of meat cut into pieces, with a rice pilau, and placed on a table about six inches high.

It being night, a large fire was kindled in the middle of the khan, and many of the Syrian peasants entered. The scene soon became very gay; they had two or three instruments of music, a couple of fifes and a flute, and several of the young peasants danced in a circle, very gracefully, to their own native airs. The various groups seated, in their light costumes, beneath the pillars in the strong

glare of the fire, or behind in the shadow of the wall, composed a striking scene; but the after-part of the night was doomed to be less agreeable to us. The villagers, one after the other, had dropped off, and not being aware that we were now entering into the territory of that race who may be considered the lineal descendants of those who so tormented the Egyptians, we lay down calmly to rest. But to rest was utterly impossible, as we were instantly invaded and bitten in every part of the body. Change of position, or place, was useless, for the old floor seemed to have been their inheritance for ages. Demetrée, Mr. G—'s Greek servant, a man of much humour and some corpulence, was peculiarly exposed to these assaults, and, after exhausting all his store of Greek oaths and anathemas, took refuge in the terrace; but above, or below, there was no escape.

We quitted this village with no small pleasure, at an early hour, fatigued and unrefreshed, and after some time entered a long and rich valley, in which we halted for an hour at mid-day, and then pursued the way to Tiberias. At a few miles distance, is shewn the field where the disciples plucked the ears of corn and ate: and within three miles of the

town, turning out of the path for a short distance, on the left, we came to the Mount of Beatitudes, where Christ preached his sermon. It is a low and verdant hill, rising gradually on every side toward the summit, on which small masses of rock are scattered. It is admirably calculated for the purpose, as a multitude of people might stand on the gently sloping sides of the mount, even to the bottom, and hear distinctly every word of the speaker. The prospect of the lake beneath, of the mountains of Gilboa, and that of Bethulia, to the north, is extremely beautiful.

Proceeding towards Tiberias, we passed by a spot on the left, on a gentle declivity, where, tradition says, the five thousand were miraculously fed. The town of Tiberias is surrounded by a wall, but it is rather a wretched place within. No ancient remains of any interest are at present found here. A small and ancient church, to which a descent of several steps beneath the surface leads, is called St. Peter's. The only lodging-place of travellers is in the house of a sheik, which is held in dread, on account of the myriads of fleas that inhabit it; from which we were fortunate enough to escape. On the shore, at some distance to the south of the town, are warm mine-

ral baths, which are much used and esteemed. At the extremity of the north-eastern shore, some remains are said still to exist where Capernaum formerly stood.

The inhabitants of the town are chiefly Jews, with some Turks. Having two letters of introduction from the Armenian convent at Jerusalem to a rich old Jew, we were fortunate enough to be admitted into his house. The apartments were handsomely furnished; the table was spread with various dishes of meat and wine at mid-day and in the evening, and we were served with breakfast in the European style. This old man was a merchant of Aleppo, where several of his sons now lived in opulence, and he had come in his old age—for he was now fourscore—and built this house far from his native home, in order that he might die at the lake of Tiberias. The attachment of the Jews to the places of their ancient record and glory, is sometimes excessively strong. In walking along the shores, we met occasionally Jews from Poland, chiefly elderly men, who had come from their country to this spot, from no other motive but to spend their last years round the lake. Our kind host had a synagogue in his house, and a Rabbi to officiate, and service was duly attended twice a

day by his wife, who was half his own age, and all his servants.

On the night of our arrival, we walked on the terraced roof to enjoy the coolness of the air. It was moonlight, and the lake and its shores were as beautiful a scene as can be conceived. It brought to mind the night, though so different a one, when Christ walked on the surface of its waves to rescue his disciples. Yet Tiberias is a scene where Nature seems still to wear as sublime and lovely an aspect, as in the day when it drew the visitations and mercies of the Lord. No curse rests on its shores, as on those of the Dead Sea; but a hallowed calm, and a majestic beauty, that are irresistibly delightful.

The length of the lake is about fourteen miles, and the breadth five. The fish it contains have a most delicious flavour, and are much the size and colour of a mullet. The boats used on it are in some seasons of the year much exposed from the sudden squalls of wind which issue from between the mountains. The water is perfectly sweet and clear. The Jordan is seen to enter it at its northern extremity, and its course is distinctly visible through the whole extent of the lake. The range of mountains forming its eastern shore,

is very lofty; their steep and rocky sides are barren, with a sprinkling of trees on a few of the summits. The western shore, where the town stands, is lower, but its picturesque hills, divided by sweet valleys, are covered with a rich carpet of verdure, but almost destitute of trees. The ride to the southern end of the lake is very pleasant, where the Jordan flows out of it. An ancient bridge, some of whose ruined and lofty arches still stand in the river, adds much to the beauty of this scene. We bathed here in the Jordan, which issues out in a stream of about fifty feet wide, and flows down a rich and deserted valley, inclosed by bare and lofty mountains. The stream was here clear and shallow; but it soon became deep and rapid. Little is said in the Scripture, respecting the extensive valley of the Jordan between Tiberias and Jericho. It must have been thickly populated from its luxuriance, being watered throughout by the river. Yet, with all the charms of its situation, the air around the lake, during the summer, is close and sultry. Of all places in Palestine, however, a stranger would desire to fix his residence here; as a situation on any of the verdant hills around would be exempt from the often oppressive air on its banks.

We now bade adieu to the hospitable old Jew, who told us he looked forward with delight to the future judgement that was to take place in the valley of Jehoshaphat, to be near which had been one cause of his coming here. It was to be only on his countrymen; all the rest of the world were to be excluded:—a very necessary measure, for how the Jews are all to squeeze into the narrow little valley is rather hard to conceive. A small Turkish camp of cavalry, intended to act against the Pacha of Acre, was pitched without the town: their various dresses and fine chargers gave great animation to the scene. The afternoon was delightful, without being at all too warm; and we wound along the cliff on the western side of the lake with uncommon pleasure, for almost every step gave new attractions to the scenery. The mountains became loftier, and within a few miles of the northern end, drew back from the lake, leaving a rich plain of two or three miles broad between. Turning off here to the left, the light failed ere we could find a resting-place for the night.

Contesini, the guide from Acre, would have us stop in a low and damp spot; but a Turk who had requested to become one of our party, advanced up on an adjoining hill, pro-

testing that there was a village somewhere in the neighbourhood. Not very long after, we heard his voice calling from some distance, and on following, found him planted in a small hamlet of three or four cottages; they looked so dirty, however, that we preferred sleeping on the roof to entering within. Having taken a frugal supper, it was vain to think of going to sleep, as from this elevated position we had a full view of the lake and its shores beneath, which were now lighted pp by a cloudless moonlight.

The next morning the wind blew extremely cold; but cold and night-dews are much less evils than the nightly tormentors, which, however, we never met with in Palestine in any place but Ebilené. We now entered on a wild and stony tract of country, till about mid-day we came to the mountain of Bethulia, and wound up it by a long and steep ascent; the upper part is covered with trees.

On its summit is the modern town of Safet, in the midst of which rises a lofty rock, the top of which is occupied by the castle of the governor. The whole appearance of the place is the most *outré* and romantic imaginable. In walking or riding along several of the

streets, you are obliged to pass over the roofs of the houses, which stand on ridges of the rock, and seem to strive which can climb highest. It is a position of immense strength, and might well defy the power of Holofernes and his army, even without the aid of the beautiful Judith :—it answers exactly to the description given in the Apocrypha.

It being very hot, we seated ourselves beneath the shade of a large tree, in the middle of the scattered town, beside a fine fountain, to which the women of the place came for water, but none of them answered to the description of their heroic ancestor. It was a market-day; the defiles and terraced roofs of the place were thronged with people from the mountains and valleys; and our servants having procured some meat, we took our repast beneath the tree, in a primeval manner, by the fountain side, sheltered from the heat. The lake, that like a beautiful spectre haunts your course often and long, was seen through an opening in the mountains, far below sparkling in the sun. The place being said to possess excellent wine, we procured some as a resource for our journey; but the search was most amusing, having to get at one house over

the roof of another, or to descend a steep passage into a divan, the windows of which looked down over perpendicular precipices.

Towards evening we descended the mountain, passing by two or three springs of delicious water, and in the course of a few hours came to the spot, opening into a rich plain, where Syria and Palestine are divided. As we were now coming into the seat of the war, it was necessary to be cautious what paths we pursued; and while hesitating, two well-dressed Turks rode by, who assured us the one before us was safe to a certain distance.

Some time after dark, we came to the bank of a stream, on which stood a solitary cottage inhabited by an old man and his son. The night was chill; and dirty as the single apartment of the cottage seemed, we should have been glad to have availed ourselves of it, but no bribe could induce the peasant to admit us. We were therefore compelled to pass a comfortless night on the banks of the stream, and by day-break proceeded over the plain, cold and dispirited: our provisions were exhausted, and there was no prospect of finding any entertainment by the way. Near the summits of the mountains on our left were scattered a few Arab tents, but they were too

far off, and our reception was too uncertain to make the attempt.

In about four or five hours we came in sight of an Arab camp, pitched near a rivulet of water in the middle of the plain, and flocks of cattle were feeding on the rich pasture; the large tent of the sheick was conspicuous in the midst; and we resolved to trust to their hospitality. Riding past the line of tents, we stopped at the door of the chief's, and alighting from our horses entered. The Arabs gave us a kind and friendly reception; we sat down on a carpet spread on the floor, and in about half an hour a repast was brought of boiled rice, cakes of bread, and fresh and delicious butter. These people are altogether a different race from the Bedouins of the Desert; they are richer, more civilized and peaceable: having settled with their flocks and herds in one of the rich and wild plains of Syria, they decamp and wander to another in search of fresh pasture. Their encampments and their journeyings probably present a vivid picture of those of the patriarchs, who with their "flocks, and herdmen, and camels, went on their journeys," until they pitched their tents in a place that had water, and was rich in pasture. While we were here, an officer ar-

rived from the Prince of the Druses, with a demand of men from the Arabs for the war, as they were within the bounds of his jurisdiction. They looked very dissatisfied at this, and deliberated on it while the officer was taking some refreshment, and who, when he had received their answer, rose up and rode away. We bade adieu to these friendly Arabs, who would have considered any offer of remuneration as an insult.

By the way, the pipe of the Syrian shepherds, playing the wild airs of the country, was often heard in the mountains, and sounded very sweetly. The country, however, through which we were passing was uninteresting.

Towards evening we again met and crossed the Jordan, not far from its source: it was here not more than a foot in width: the course of this river is for the most part perfectly straight. In the plain near where Syria and Palestine are said to join, it flows into a small lake, and thence to the lake of Tiberias and the Dead Sea; it has scarcely a winding in its course.

We now began to wind up the steep hill, on the top of which the town of Hasbeia stands. Here again street ascends over street; it is an old and populous town, and the ancient palace

of the great sheick, or Prince, is in the middle. We took up our abode in the house of one of the natives, and being very fatigued, were delighted at the sight of a good fire, and the busy preparations for supper. In this house four brothers and their wives dwelt together in harmony. In the night it rained very hard, which put the roads into a dreadful condition.

We set out in the forenoon, and in the course of a few hours the weather cleared up; the tract we travelled over bore marks of the devastations of the war; the fine village of Rasheia, which we passed by, was destroyed: this was the result of a battle fought a few weeks before, in which five men had been killed; the force to which they belonged took to flight, and the victors spread havock around as they went on. In the great battle, which was fought on the plain behind us a few days after our passing, between the troops of Damascus and those of the Prince of the Druses, joined with the force of Acre, ten thousand men were engaged on both sides, who fought with the distant fire of musquetry. Sixty of the Damascenes were slain, on which the army took to flight, and had the Acrians pushed on, they might easily have entered the city.

At night we stopped in another large village, part of which had been also destroyed. We always found the Syrians very civil, and willing to afford the best accommodation in their power. On entering the cottage of a peasant, a fire is kindled on the floor, which is of wood or earth; eggs are always to be had, sometimes fowls, and you spread your mattress on the floor, and the people are thankful for a small remuneration.

The next morning we were obliged to pass the summits of some of the mountains, which, as well as part of their sides, were covered with snow. The mountain of Gibl Sheich, crowned with snow, had for a day or two been a sublime object on the right.

On the following day we set out early, impatient to behold the celebrated plain of Damascus; a large round mountain in front prevented us from catching a glimpse at it, till, on turning a point of the rock, it appeared suddenly at our feet. Perhaps the barren and dreary hills we had been for some days passing, made the plain look doubly beautiful, yet we stood gazing at it for some time ere we advanced. The domes and minarets of the sacred city rose out of the heart of a forest of gardens and trees, which was twelve miles in

circumference. Four or five small rivers ran through the forest and the city, glittering at intervals in the sun; and to form that vivid contrast of objects in which Asiatic so much excels European scenery, the plain was encircled on three of its sides by mountains of light and naked rocks.

LETTER XIX.

After descending the mountain, we were some time travelling through avenues of trees and gardens before we entered the city. In the course of the day, we went to the Spanish Catholic convent, that contained a small number of fathers, who lived very comfortably; but we had not come to Damascus to live in convents, so in the course of two or three days we procured excellent apartments in the house of a merchant, a Syrian of the Greek religion. We stooped low to enter a mean door in the street, and found ourselves in a court neatly paved, containing orange and lemon trees, and a fine fountain in the middle. On the right of the fountain was an arched recess in the wall, on the floor of which a divan was laid, and here we took our coffee and pipe. A large and lofty apartment opened into the court, the lower part of which was floored with fine mar-

ble, with a small fountain playing in the midst; the upper part was covered with carpets and cushions. Our host had a family of sweet children, and his wife, a rather young and pretty woman, would sometimes insist on attending us at table in spite of every remonstrance.

The city of Damascus is seven miles in circumference; the width is quite disproportioned to the length, which is above two miles. The walls of this, the most ancient city in the world, are low, and do not inclose it more than two thirds round. The street, still called Straight, and where St. Paul is, with reason, said to have lived, is entered by the road from Jerusalem. It is as straight as an arrow, a mile in length, broad, and well-paved. A lofty window in one of the towers to the east, is shown us as the place where the Apostle was let down in a basket. In the way to Jerusalem is the spot where his course was arrested by the light from Heaven! A Christian is not allowed to reside here, except in a Turkish dress: the Turks of Damascus, the most bigoted to their religion, are less strict than in other parts in some of their customs. The women are allowed a great deal of liberty, and are met with every evening in the beautiful prome-

nades around the city, walking in parties, or seated by the river side. The women of the higher orders, however, keep more aloof, and form parties beneath the trees, and, attended by one or two of their guardians, listen to the sound of music. Most of them wore a loose white veil, but this was often turned aside, either for coolness, or to indulge a passenger with a glimpse of their features. They had oftentimes fair and ruddy complexions, with dark eyes and hair, but were not remarkable for their beauty. Women of a certain description are often seen in parties, each mounted on a good horse, well dressed and unveiled, driving on with much gaiety and noise, with a male attendant to protect them from insult. The fruits of the plain are of various kinds, and of excellent flavour. Provisions are cheap, the bread is the finest to be found in the East; it is sold every morning in small light cakes, perfectly white, and surpasses in quality even that of Paris. These cakes, with clouted cream, sold in the streets fresh every morning, the most delicious honey, and Arabian coffee, formed our daily breakfast.

This luxurious city is no place to perform penance in; the paths around, winding through

the mass of woods and fruit-trees, invite you daily to the most delightful rides and walks. Summer-houses are found in profusion; some of the latter may be hired for a day's use, or are open for rest and refreshment, and you sit beneath the fruit-trees, or on the divan which opens into the garden. If you feel at any time satiated, you have only to advance out of the canopy of woods, and mount the naked and romantic heights of some of the mountains around, amidst the sultry beams of the sun, and you will soon return to the shades and waters beneath, with fresh delight.

Among the fruits produced in Damascus are, oranges, citrons, and apricots of various kinds. The most exquisite conserves of fruits are made here, amongst which are dried cakes of roses. The celebrated plain of roses, from the produce of which the rich perfume is obtained, is about three miles from the town; it is a part of the great plain, and its entire area is thickly planted with rose trees, in the cultivation of which great care is taken. One of the best tarts we ever tasted was composed of nothing but rose leaves.

There are several extensive cemeteries around the city: here the women often repair in the morning to mourn over the dead their various

ways of manifesting their grief were striking, and some of them very affecting; one widow was accompanied by her little daughter; they knelt before the tomb, when both wept long and bitterly. Others were clamorous in their laments, but the wailing of this mother was low and heart-breaking; some threw themselves prostrate with shrill cries, and others bent over the sepulchres without uttering a word. In some of the cemeteries we often observed flowers and pieces of bread laid on the tombs, beside which the relations sat in silence.

The great bazaar for the reception of the caravans at Damascus, is a noble building; the roof is very lofty, and supported by pillars; in the midst is a large dome. An immense fountain adorns the stone floor beneath, around which are the warehouses for the various merchandize: the circular gallery above opens into a number of chambers for the lodging of the merchants.

The large mosque is a fine and spacious building; but no traveller is permitted more than to gaze through the door as he passes by. Its beautiful and lofty dome and minaret form a conspicuous object in every view of the town. Many of the private houses have a splendid interior; but there is

nothing sightly in the part that fronts the street. The passage of two or three of the rivers through the town, is a singular luxury, their banks being in general lined with trees, and crossed by light bridges, where seats and cushions are laid out for the passengers. The bazaars are the most agreeable and airy in the East, where the richest silks and brocades of the East, sabres, balsam of Mecca, and the produce of India and Persia are to be found. But one luxury, which Wortley Montague declared only was wanting to make the Mussulman life delightful, is scarcely to be found in Damascus—good wine. The monks of the convent have strong and excellent white wine; but a traveller must be indebted to their kindness, or go without. The numerous sherbet shops in the streets are a welcome resource in the sultry weather. The sellers are well-dressed, clean, and remarkably civil. Two or three large vessels are constantly full of this beverage, beside which is kept a quantity of ice. The seller fills a vase with the sherbet that is coloured by some fruit, strikes a piece of ice or snow into it, and directly presents it to your lips.

Our abode was not far from the gate that conducted to the most frequented and charm-

ing walks around the city. Here four or five of the rivers meet, and form a large and foaming cataract, a short distance from the walls. In this spot it was pleasant to sit or walk beneath the trees; for the exciting sounds and sights of nature are doubly welcome near an eastern city, to relieve the languor and stillness that prevail. A few coffee-sellers took their stand here, and, placing small seats in the shade, served you with their beverage and the chibouque.

We often went to the pleasant village at the foot of the mountain Salehiéh; one of the streams passed through it: almost every house had its garden; and above the mass of foliage, in the midst of them, rose the dome and minaret of the mosque, and just beyond the grey and naked cliffs. The finest view of the city is to the right of this place: a light kiosque stands partly up the ascent of the mountain, into which admission is afforded, and from its cool and upper apartment, the prospect of the city, its woods, plain, and mountains is indescribably rich and delightful. The plain in front is uninclosed, and its level extent stretches to the east as far as the eye can reach.

The place called the "Meeting of the Waters," is about five miles to the north-west of the

city. Here the river Barrady, which may be the ancient Abana, being enlarged by another river that falls into it about two miles off, is divided into several streams, which flow through the plain. The separation is the result of art, and takes place at the foot of one or two rocky hills, and the scene is altogether very picturesque. The streams, six or seven in number, are some of them carried to water the orchards and gardens of the higher grounds, others into the lower, but all meet at last close to the city, and form the fine cataract.

The streets of Damascus, except that called Straight, are narrow; they are all paved, and the road leading out for some miles to the village of Salehiéh, is all neatly paved with flat smooth stones, and possesses a good footpath. Small rivulets of water run on each side, and beside these are rows of trees, with benches occasionally for the accommodation of passengers; near which is sometimes found a moveable coffee-seller, so that ease and refreshment are instantly obtained. The houses of the city are built for a few feet of the lower part with stone, the rest is of brick.

The inhabitants dress more richly than in any other Turkish city, and more warmly than to the south, for the climate is often cold in

winter; and the many streams of water, however rich the fertility they produce, are said to give too great a humidity to the air. It would be a good situation for an European physician; and Monsieur Chaboiceau, a Frenchman, who has resided here forty years, being now eighty years old, appears to live in comfort and affluence, has good practice, and is much esteemed. The great sheick mountain, crowned with snow, is a fine and refreshing object from the city; and large quantities of snow are often brought from it for the use of the sherbet shops, and the luxury of the more affluent inhabitants. Every private house of any respectability is supplied with fountains, and in some of the coffee-houses a *jet d'eau* rises to the height of five or six feet, around which are seats and cushions.

We passed our time very agreeably here. In the evening some of the friends of our host came to sit and converse, and we sometimes rode into the plain, at the extremity of the line of foliage. The number of Christians in the city is computed at ten thousand, natives of the place, of which those of the Greek religion are the most numerous, and there are many Catholics and Armenians. They appear

to live in great comfort, in the full and undisturbed exercise of their religion and their different customs. The intolerance of the Turks is more in sound than in reality; in all our intercourse with them we found them polite, friendly, and hospitable, and never for a moment felt the least personal apprehension in their territory, whether in towns or villages, or when we met them in remote situations. They are a generous and honourable people, and vindictiveness and deceit are not in their nature.

The state of the Jews at this time in Damascus was particularly fortunate; the minister of the Pacha was one of their nation, and they enjoyed the utmost freedom and protection. Every evening they were seen amusing themselves outside the walls with various pastimes, and the faithful were looking on with perfect complacency.

One morning while walking about the city, we heard the report of several cannon, to announce the beheading of two commanders who had taken flight along with their troops, at the battle with the force of Acre and Lebanon a few days before.

On our arrival in Damascus, we had intended to hire a separate residence, and were

recommended to a rather affluent Turk, who possessed one or two houses that were at present vacant. He was a barber, and exhibited another proof of the respectability of this class of people in the East, as is apparent in the Arabian Nights. The old man, extremely well dressed, with a good length of beard, was always found seated at his ease, smoking, or chatting with some of his friends. He wished us to take a luxurious apartment of his, situated on a terraced roof; it was profusely gilded, and the cushions of its divan were as white as snow, and it commanded a superb view of the city and mountains. But the barber's wife was by far the more zealous part of himself, and protested with loud clamour, that infidels should never sully the purity and beauty of her divan; and he explained to us with sorrow, that after a warm dispute, he was compelled to give way. He told us that when Buonaparte and his army were in Syria, he and many others of Damascus, took arms and travelled a great distance to fight with the Giaours for the honour of the prophet. "They were full of zeal, and our forces," said the old man, "soon had an action;—we were beat, and I received a severe wound; and when they carried me with them

in the retreat, in an agony of pain I cried out, 'what had I to do with Giaours?—go to hell all the world!'"

The greatest luxuries the city contains are the coffee-houses; many of these are built on the bosom of the river, and supported by piles. The platform of the coffee-house is raised only a few inches above the level of the stream; the roof is supported by slender rows of pillars, and it is quite open on every side; innumerable small seats cover the floor, and you take one of these and place it in the position you like best; the river, whose surrounding banks are covered with wood, rushes rapidly by close to your feet. Near the coffee-houses are one or two cataracts several feet high, with a few trees growing out of the river beside them; and the perpetual sound of their fall, and the coolness they spread around, are exquisite luxuries in the sultry heat of day. At night, when the lamps, suspended from the slender pillars, are lighted, and Turks of different ranks, in all the varieties of their rich costume, cover the platform, just above the surface of the river, on which, and on its foaming waterfalls, the moonlight rests, and the sound of music is heard, you fancy that if

ever the Arabian Nights' enchantments are to be realised, it is here.

These cool and delightful places were our daily and favourite lounge: they are resorted to at all hours of the day. There are two or three coffee-houses constructed somewhat differently from the one just described. A low gallery divides the platform from the tide; fountains play on the floor, which is furnished with sofas and cushions; and music and dancing always abound. Together with a pipe and coffee, they bring you two or three delicious cherbets, and fruit of some kind is also put into the vase presented you. In the middle of the river that rushed round one of these latter cafés, was a little island covered with verdure and trees, where you might go and sit for hours without once desiring a change of place.

The Arabian story-tellers often resort here; their tales are frequently accompanied by a guitar; the most eminent among them are Arabs. There are a few small coffee-houses more select, where the Turkish gentlemen often go, from dinner-parties, and spend the day.

We paid a visit to the Catholic convent one day, during which one of the Pacha's sons came with a numerous retinue; he looked at the few curiosities of the place, and fixed his

eyes on two large silver goblets, which put the fathers in a fever lest he should take a fancy to them. One of the gentlemen who accompanied him, and who was his tutor, made some extempore poetry in praise of the establishment, and presented it to the superior, but it was very dull. Among the fathers was a very corpulent and zealous old man, who had an uncommon desire to make Michel a good Catholic; he invited him to his chamber one evening, and having placed a bottle of excellent cordial on the table, he began to remonstrate with great earnestness on the errors of the Greek church, in which the latter was brought up; who, listening with great acquiescence, the bottle of cordial and the conference were finished nearly at the same time, both leaving the father not a little elevated with a sense of his own eloquence, for Michel had not spared tears on the occasion.

The Pacha of Damascus was a mild and humane man, and the people appeared very happy under his government. The system of the Porte, however, of changing these officers every three years, prevents any enduring good effects being derived from the best administration. There are no spectacles or public amusements of any kind in the city; the

pilgrimage to Mecca must do the Turks good even in this life, if it only causes a vivid excitement in their minds, and serves them to think of and talk about all their life after. It is a strong proof of their obedience and regard to the prophet's laws, that amidst a life so apathetic, and so many hours of which are consumed in devotion, they should have existed more than twelve hundred years without the slightest inclination to idolatry, or the smallest excitement to the senses in their religion. What a contrast between the mind and practice of the Turk and the Jew!—the one having enjoyed the knowledge of the true faith, the other but the imitation of it: both carried the conquering sword into idolatrous nations: both received the same solemn warnings against imitating them, and yet what a different result.

There are several charitable establishments in the city, in which provisions are distributed to the poor, and medicines to the sick: one of these is a spacious and magnificent building. The Turkish gentlemen are very fond of riding in their superb plains; towards the east its vast level affords a fine area, and walking is far more practised here than in the capitals of Egypt or Turkey, from the attractions, no

doubt, of the promenades around the walls. On the north-west is the fine and lonely mountain of Ashloon, near which passes the road to Palmyra. We had an ardent desire to visit this ruin; but one or two serious obstacles prevented it. The great number of tall palm and cypress trees in the plain of Damascus, add much to its beauty, particularly in the village of Salehieh, where we spent some hours in the handsome house of a rich man, who allowed it to be hired during the day, for the reception of strangers. The large saloon was a beautiful apartment, opening into a small and delightful garden, through which ran a cool and rapid stream. The windows looked towards the plain and city; some of the houses, in the abundance of the luxury of water, have small and handsome reservoirs in their gardens, whose sides are neatly walled and shaded, and into which fountains play.

A good and handsome house can be hired by a traveller at a low rent; and this will be found the most independent and agreeable mode of residence: the great drawback in this, as in most other oriental abodes, is the want of society. In a visit of a few weeks this cannot be felt; but in a protracted stay of years, as in a few instances, a man's soul,

as well as body, must be orientalized. Yet who can leave the superb climates and scenes of the East, without joining in the eloquent and just lament of Anastasius, when gazing on them for the last time, as he sailed for Europe to revisit them no more. Early associations also may contribute to the impassioned and romantic remembrances which an eastern journey never fails to leave behind. The transition from the garden to the wilderness—the shadow and repose of the tent in a cheerless and burning plain—the desert fountain and palm—the kind welcome in the wild, and the devotions of its people, offered up in the stillness of its scenery—these are the living and vivid pictures which delighted our early imaginations, and the only ones nature presented to the first ages of mankind, and to the patriarchs and prophets who were the favourites of heaven.

The appearance of the Arabs who enter the city is picturesque. We one day met a procession of chiefs, who had come from the deserts on a visit of ceremony to the Pacha. They were well mounted, and were mostly slender men, with expressive features, and piercing black eyes. Their cloaks were of cotton, with various coloured stripes, and they

wore light yellow turbans; they seemed out of place, and looked as if they would much rather be making a dash at the city, than paying a visit of ceremony.

The women are frequently seen walking in the bazaars; they universally wear a white cloak, (which covers also the upper part of the head like a hood) and shoes and slippers; the latter, as is the custom of the men, are worn within the former, which are always left at the door of the apartment. They often appear out in small boots of yellow leather, and do not, in the streets, seem quite such hideous figures as in Stamboul and Cairo. The tunic, or short vest, is often richly embroidered; in winter it is of cloth, with an edging, even at the wrists, of white fur; the pantaloon invariably worn, is of silk, and fancifully adorned or spangled, and fastened by a sash round the inner vest; over these is worn the robe. The blue eye is unknown among the Turkish ladies, and a few of their jet black locks are generally suffered to fall beneath the turban. Their hands are beautifully small and white, and adorned with rings, and bracelets also on the wrists. No support to the bosom is ever used. The dress altogether, although it hides much of the symmetry and beauty of the figure,

gives it a grand and imposing air, particularly the elegant cashmere turban, of which European ladies, if they possess it, spoil the effect by not knowing how to put it on.

We now resolved to conclude our stay here, and visit the ruins of Balbec; and taking leave of the kind family, at whose residence we had passed so many agreeable hours, we set out, with a guide and horses, at an early hour, towards the mountains to the north of the city.

LETTER XX.

On the summit of the mountains we stopped to take a farewell view of the celebrated plain at our feet, and then advanced over a barren tract till we came to a spot, watered by one or two rivers, and shaded with trees. These luxurious retreats are often resorted to by the inhabitants of the city. The road afterwards wound through wild and rocky defiles in the mountains, and by the steep side of a rapid torrent that flowed over its course beneath, till, towards evening, we came into a plain, and passed the night in the cottage of a peasant. The next day was uncommonly fine, and we pursued our way in good spirits. The aspect of the country was more agreeable than on the preceding day, and the cottages were more numerously scattered.

Soon after sunset we came to Zibolané, a large village finely situated, and surrounded

with groves, and a river ran through the middle of it. The habitation of one of the villagers was again our home; they spread their best mat on the floor, in the midst of which the fire burned bright and cheerfully, and prepared a good supper of fowls and eggs, followed by coffee and the chibouque; and we found the luxuries of Damascus had not spoiled our relish of this simple and friendly reception.

Demetrie the servant of Mr. G. was a bigotted Greek, and true to his country, though not a little of a rogue, and a great gourmand. Every evening he said his prayers to the Virgin, accompanied with crossings, which, after the Greek fashion, were drawn from his chin to his middle; and the constant subject of his prayers was, that the Virgin would give him plenty to eat and drink, and send him home safe to his family.

On the third day we came to the ruins of Balbec, which, being approached from Damascus, are not seen till you are almost close on them. The village adjoining is very mean, and contains a few hundred inhabitants; it has a mosque and minaret. This place was situated just between the limits of the rival

pachas, and was under the jurisdiction of neither. We made our way to the wretched residence of a Greek priest, who looked the picture of squalidness and poverty, and resides in this lonely spot to minister to two or three score of Christians. He drew a key out of his pocket, and unlocked with great care a waste and dark apartment a few yards from his own.

We soon sallied out to visit the temple, but were encountered about half way by the governor or sheick of the village, who, with much clamour, refused to allow us to proceed till he understood who we were. We accordingly walked back, and in a short time he made his appearance at the priest's, accompanied by an armed soldier, and a number of the villagers gathered round. The sheick demanded money for permission to see the ruins, and after much altercation, and violent threats on his side, the sum was reduced to twenty-seven piastres, on receiving which, he went away, and troubled us no more.

The sun set on the vast temple and the mountains around it with indescribable grandeur: the chain of Anti-Libanus in front was covered with snow, and the plain, wild and beautiful, stretched at its feet farther than the

eye could reach. The pigeons, of many coloured plumage, flew in clusters around the ruined walls, at whose feet were a variety of trees and flowers, amidst which ran a clear and rapid stream. The outer wall that incloses the great area of the building to the north, is immensely high, and about six hundred feet long; the western wall is lower, being more broken; and mid-way of its height are the three enormous stones, about sixty feet long, and twelve wide. The temple itself is near one hundred and eighty feet in length, and half that in width, and is surrounded by a single row of pillars, forty-four in number, nearly sixty feet high, and twenty-six feet in circumference; they are, as well as the temple, of a fine granite, of a light red colour; their capitals are of the Corinthian order, of exquisite workmanship, and are very little defaced; indeed, the entireness and preservation of the decorations of this superb temple are surprizing. The architrave and cornice are beautifully carved; three or four of these columns, separated from the roof, recline against the wall of the temple; and on the south side, one noble pillar has sunk from its position into the clear and beautiful pool formed by the foun-

tain beneath the temple, against the body of which half its length and rich capital still support themselves.

The magnificence of this corridor can scarcely be imagined; its western aspect is towards the plain, and at your feet lie masses of broken pillars, capitals, and friezes, over which you must pass to approach the temple; from the north you look down on the vast area within the walls, the sides of which are lined with ruined chambers elegantly carved and adorned, and numerous niches for statues, now, however, empty. The south hangs over the fountain and sheet of water below, in whose bosom it is clearly reflected. The interior of the building is above a hundred and twenty feet long, but is narrow in proportion to its length. In the sides of the walls is a double row of pilasters, and between these are numerous niches where statues formerly stood. In many parts of the temple, around the place of entrance, and on the roof of the corridor, are sculptured in an exquisite manner figures of the heathen deities, of the eagle with outspread wings, &c. The roof of the interior is entirely gone.

The hands of the natives have no doubt

committed many ravages here; Faccardine, prince of the Druses, destroyed or injured several parts of these ruins, but when he afterwards visited Italy and contracted a taste for its architecture, he bitterly lamented the sacrilege he had committed at Balbec. The Turks have, without doubt, used it as a fortification, as they have made additions to some parts of the walls, and left many vestiges of their barbarian architecture blended with the colossal remains of the temple.

About a hundred feet from this edifice is a row of Corinthian pillars, much loftier and more slender than those of the great corridor; they stand alone on an elevated site, and their rich capitals and architrave are still entire. Six only now remain, and their appearance is peculiarly elegant. On them the setting sun lingers the last of all the ruin, and their slender and dark red shafts, beheld at some distance in the purple light, as they stand high and aloof, have a solemn and shadowy appearance,—as if they stood on the tomb of former greatness.

On the south-east side, nearer to the village, is a small circular building of marble, richly ornamented with sculpture, and supported by pillars; it is in a rather ruinous

condition, but appears quite unconnected with the mass of buildings adjoining: its roof, in the form of a dome, though shattered, is still standing.

About a mile down the plain is the quarry from which the enormous stones used in the construction of Balbec were hewn; one still remains, the chief part smoothed and prepared with great labour for building, but adhering by one of its sides to the native rock: it is of a coarse granite, and its dimensions are much superior to either of the three great stones in the middle of the wall. The labour of removing such enormous masses, and then of elevating them to so great a height, must have been immense; how the latter could have been achieved is marvellous. A few of the smaller pillars appear to be of a solid piece of coarse marble; but the large columns are composed of three or four pieces of the native material.

Covered galleries, several hundred feet in length, the walls of prodigious thickness, are hollowed beneath the temple. The interior of the temple was divided into three aisles, but most of the pillars which formed them are destroyed: at the upper end, a few steps lead to the altar, or sacred place, but the idol

formerly adored here is gone from its place, which, however, is adorned with a variety of beautiful sculpture. Exposed as this roofless temple has been for so many ages to every storm, it is surprising the decorative parts of it have not suffered more; but the shafts of many of the pillars without, which face the north-east, have been rent and hollowed in some parts.

At Balbec, as at other eastern ruins, a traveller must luxuriate on the pleasures of imagination, for he will get no luxury more substantial. The darkness and misery of the good father's habitation were extreme; his hair hung long and bushy like that of a Santon; and his whole garb and person looked as if water had long been a stranger to them. He stood in extreme fear of the Turkish governor.

Before sunrise in the morning we were at the ruin, and the spectacle soon was magnificent: as the purple light covered the snowy mountains in front, the line of vapour at their feet had so entirely the appearance of a river, that we could not, for some time, persuade ourselves it was not so. The description in Lalla Rookh of the plain and its ruins is exquisitely faithful; the minaret is on the de-

clivity near at hand, and there wanted only the muezzin's cry to break the silence. The golden light now rested on the six lone and beautiful pillars, and gradually sunk on the temple and the various portals and broken masses that crowded the area around it.

We left Balbec towards evening, and proceeded over the extensive plain: which, in a few hours, afforded some pleasing scenes of villages and cultivated fields around them. We then again ascended the hills; the road became barren and wild; and the light had for some time left us when we arrived at a long and straggling mountain-village, the inhabitants of which were very civil and friendly.—We were accommodated in a hut, which, however, was very clean, and the walls whitewashed. The wine which the good fathers of the monastery had given us, had been finished long since, and we were fain to make some wretched stuff the villagers brought serve as a substitute. Numbers of the people crowded around us, and the fumes of their eternal pipes filled the apartment.

Before sunrise we quitted the village, and ascended some of the loftiest parts of Lebanon. The clouds gathered around us, the air became very chill; and about mid-day we

reached a lonely habitation, in the rocky path, and were glad to find a fire kindled, and the cup of coffee ready to be offered. How could these people have lived before the discovery of this beverage, the elixir, the universal solace, the champaigne of the East? In the most desolate khan it is put to your lips, and it is considered strange if you ever pass by and refuse it.

As the clouds dispersed at intervals, glimpses of wild and varied scenery were enjoyed; regions of rocks and precipices, mingled villages, and an abundant verdure. In the evening we arrived at a small and wretched khan, that had previously been taken possession of by a caravan that had halted just before. After much altercation and difficulty, we procured room to lie down and sleep; and the morning light was welcome that awoke us to pursue our journey to Beirout. The path now became more rich and verdant; and, descending a steep and narrow road, we beheld with joy the harbour and sweet gardens of the town far beneath.

Proceeding to the residence of Mr. A. the Consul, we received a warm and hospitable reception; and spent a few days with him with great pleasure. We still entertained some

thoughts of visiting Palmyra; but the war was kept up between the Pachas with more animosity than ever: two or three times we had met bodies of soldiers in the service of the Prince of the Druses, proceeding to the scene of action. They were well armed, but marched in a tumultuous manner; it was indeed a mockery of warfare, but the effects fell heavily on the poor peasantry, as on one occasion we saw near two thousand sheep collected together, plundered from the natives by orders of the Prince of Acre. It was said that the Porte, wearied with the excesses of this young tyrant, had sent the Capidgé Bashi for his head, but like his ancestor Djezzar, he kept on his guard, and refused to see the messenger.

In the midst of these disorders, Lady S—— remained perfectly secure; no hand ever dared move against her tranquillity, or breath of reproach be raised. The missionaries hoped to enlist her in their cause, and powerful indeed would have been her interference; but from some unfortunate casualty, or misunderstanding, the minister for the conversion of the Jews incensed her beyond forgiveness. Her favour in this land is better than the smiles of princes, but not so her anger. She ordered the servant of the missionary to be roundly

chastised by her dragoman, and wrote to his master a letter, which commenced thus: "It is astonishing that you should have dared to direct your steps to my residence; you, who have left a religion sublime, though defective, for that which is only a shadow." He was the son of a Rabbi, but had embraced Christianity.

In this war of the Pachas, the Greeks have been great sufferers. Many who had fled from the Morea, as well as those who dwelt in the country, had placed their effects for better security in some of the convents in the mountains. The chiefs of Acre and the Druses, having intelligence of this, sent some bodies of soldiers, who, in spite of the remonstrances of the monks, carried off all the booty, which was very rich.

We found an acquaintance, Mr. J. the English merchant, from Smyrna, in great trouble. His servant, a Greek, and quite a youth, was a good-looking fellow, and had grown a great favourite with some of the single, and some of the married women of the place, and to support his expenses, he plundered his master during his absence in Damascus, and dashed away to his heart's content. Not long after, he was arrested, and lodged in prison; one or two Moslems persuaded him to change his re-

ligion. He forthwith assumed the turban, and with it his liberty; and in his new dress was seen walking about the streets, free from all inquisition for his knavery, and his prospects brighter than ever.

The custom which the women of Lebanon have had from time immemorial, of wearing a silver horn on their heads, does not extend to Beirout: this horn is often a foot and half high, with a variety of uncouth figures carved on it, and it is fastened by a silken string. They generally carry their veils over it, and let them fall on one side of the face, which has a graceful and theatrical appearance.

A circumstance took place here that amused us a good deal. A genteel, but rather wild-looking young Swiss one day came to the consul's: he appeared very fatigued and careworn, and happy to find a place of refuge, for he was just arrived from the mountains. The history of this poor gentleman affords a striking picture of religious enthusiasm in its highest excess. He had been, he said, a great profligate in his own country, but had been reclaimed by the preaching of the celebrated Madame Krudener, and soon after considered it his duty to go and preach the gospel in the lands from which it was first promulgated: in

fine, to turn the Arabs and the Orientals in general to Christianity. He landed at Alexandria, and his money being exhausted, Mr. Lee, the consul, gave him a small supply. With this he found his way by sea to Acre, and then wandered up the country towards the mountains. He found no one who cared to listen to his addresses, or to show him hospitality; owing, perhaps, to two reasons, that his finances were low, and that he knew not a word of the language; the latter he intended quickly to acquire. But one fine afternoon he came to a grove of trees in some part of Lebanon, in one of which was a girl gathering fruit. She was either handsome, or her dress attracted his attention; and, being very near-sighted, he stood at the foot of the tree with his spectacles on, gazing intently upwards. The girl, who had never seen a pair of spectacles before, became alarmed, and cried out; when two young men, who were at work not far off, came up, and charged him with using magical arts on the girl, as they had observed his spectacles and fixed gaze. They beat him unmercifully, and plundered him of all the money he had left; and in this plight he found his way to the consul at Beirout. We persuaded him to quit his projects of evangelizing the natives, and turn

his face homewards without delay; and being reinforced with a little cash, this young enthusiast set off next day, and we afterwards heard he had reached Alexandria, but whether he bent his course back to Switzerland, and finally relinquished his plans, we never learned.

This was a premature and unsuccessful attempt; but too much caution cannot be used in the efforts, now so general and admired, of reclaiming the people of the East from their errors and superstitions. The cunning and knavery of the Syrians will often prove an overmatch for the simplicity of the missionary. Father T. in Jerusalem, is one proof of this; and there were two brothers of Mount Lebanon, clever and designing fellows both of them, who agreed to be baptized, and become useful agents, on the promise of some hundred pounds, to be paid them by a wealthy and zealous supporter of the cause. The noted Eusebius, bishop of Mount Lebanon, came to England about six years ago to set forth the dark and distressed state of the Syrian christians: he was chaperoned through many of the colleges at Oxford, by one of the masters; and was made much of by some ministers, though mistrusted by others. His short stature, his red hair and beard, were any thing but prepos-

sessing; but he interested the feelings and hopes of numbers, by his affecting details of the desolation of his country, and finally set off with a capital printing-press for printing copies of the Testament, and about eight hundred pounds in money. When we were at Sidon, we found that this eastern dignitary was living in a style of excessive comfort, and to his heart's content, at a few hours' distance. With this money, which was a fortune in the East, he has purchased a good house and garden; not one farthing had ever gone to renovate the condition of the Christians of the East, and the printing-press, or some fragments of it, were known to have found their way to Alexandria.

A Roman Count, signor ——, arrived at Beirout a few days ago. He came all the way from Rome, for the sole object of seeing Balbec. At the age of seventy, and without any companion, the poor old man had need of all his enthusiasm to support him under the fatigues of the journey. He had landed first at Cyprus, where he was almost immediately seized with a fever, that confined him two months. As soon as he was recovered, he took passage for Beirout, and arrived in safety. His conversation was full of energy and fire

when speaking of the ruined temple he was about to visit, which he looked forward to with the same delight and hope as the pilgrim of the Desert does to the holy dome of Mecca. He set out in a few days; but we left Beirout too early to know if his journey was prosperous or not, or whether any of the straggling detachments of soldiery had intercepted him.

My old acquaintance W. had less of the spirit of curiosity, who spent three weeks at Cairo, and never went to see the pyramids. But his enthusiasm and zeal were directed to a different object. He set out one morning from Beirout in a deluge of rain, contrary to our persuasion, to climb the heights of Lebanon, in order to try to make a good Christian of the Prince of the Druses. The latter, "all things to all men," received him with much civility, listened attentively to his impassioned discourse, and assented, with looks of gravity and wisdom, to the perfect truth of it. He drank coffee and smoked the chibouque with his guest, and ordered dinner to be prepared for him. W. left the palace with feelings little short of rapture at the success of his visit, and travelled over the rocky paths and defiles of the mountain for a long time, till he lost his way. It was an evening in January,

and it quickly became dark; the rain fell in torrents, and the wind blew with extreme violence, when the guide perceived the light of a solitary cottage amidst the wild acclivities. Fatigued, and drenched to the skin, W. found a friendly reception from the owner, who was a Maronite, and who soon spread before him some coarse fare. Another traveller, who chanced to be a Greek monk, soon after arrived; and the trio assembled with great good will round a fire that burned cheerfully in the middle of the floor. It so happened, that the subject of religion, and the state of the churches in the East, was introduced: it was throwing down the gauntlet. The Maronite maintained the superior purity of his own doctrines—the Greek treated him as little better than a schismatic—and W. forgetting in a moment his extreme fatigue and exhaustion, descanted with great earnestness on the unhappy errors in which they were both involved. The storm, that raged furiously without, interrupted them not, and hour after hour fled away, till the dawn of morning, ere they thought of retiring to rest; and he complained on his return, of the obstinacy and difficulty of conviction of his fellow travellers.

The snow still rested on the interior summits

of Lebanon; around which the air was extremely cold, and the habitations few. "The forests, the cedar trees, the glory of Lebanon," as scripture speaks of them, have, in a great measure, disappeared, to make way for innumerable plantations of vines. No mountain in or around Palestine, retains its ancient beauty so much as Carmel. Two or three villages, and some scattered cottages, are found on it; its groves are few, but luxuriant: it is no place for crags and precipices, or "rocks of the wild goats," but its surface is covered with a rich and constant verdure. In one of our visits to it, we had wandered for the whole day, and arrived late and fatigued at a cottage, that promised the rudest fare and lodging. But we were agreeably disappointed, when the dirty floor of the naked apartment was covered with a small but handsome carpet and cushions, and a repast, consisting of delicious honey and clouted cream, as used in the west of England, was set before us, with coffee and the pipe, and the whole was seasoned with the kindest welcome. This was a convincing proof that all was not barren in the land of promise, and that the traveller's step is not repulsed from its inhospitable doors.

LETTER XXI.

Our second residence at Beirout was much more agreeable than the former, as the weather was now uniformly fine and clear, without any oppressive heat. The climates of Italy and Greece are both very inferior to that of the coast of Syria; which is free from the severe and frequent changes of the former, and the extreme cold which winter often gives to the latter. The rainy season, which lasts only a few weeks, is the only inconvenience a traveller experiences on the Syrian coast; and very many lives would no doubt be annually saved, if a portion of the consumptive patients so constantly sent to the South of France and Italy, where the often piercing winds hurry them to the grave, were landed in this healthy country.

The recluses of the convents, so thickly scattered over Mount Lebanon, have reason to

bless their lot: the taste they have shown in the choice of many of their situations, is admirable; the most extensive and superb scenery, both of sea and land, is at their feet. The great number of old men you see in this region proves the healthiness of the air. Among the Druses, in particular, the many fine and venerable figures arrest the admiration of the traveller.

Emir Bushe[illegible], the prince of the Druses, has decided the event of the war between the Pachas, by the numerous hardy troops he has sent into the field. This man is a crafty and ambitious prince; and though now old, maintains, by his crimes and his policy, an extensive and arbitrary power. In the quarrels of the Turkish Pachas with each other, his aid is anxiously sought by both. But this time the young Pacha of Acre had bribed him with a beautiful handjar, whose hilt was studded with diamonds, and a sum of money, to send ten thousand of his mountain-troops into the field to his assistance. We often met these troops, on foot or on horseback, proceeding to the scene of action: they accosted us civilly, and were much better company to meet than the soldiers of Acre, who always looked as if they longed to plunder us. Indeed, where

men are so much in the habit of cutting off noses, ears, and heads, at the fancy of their master, a taste for violent deeds is not to be wondered at. A woman one morning, during our stay at Acre, seeing the soldiers enter with the heads of some unfortunate fellows they had killed, upbraided them with their cowardice and cruelty, in murdering the innocent peasants, and producing their heads as those of their enemies, in order to gain the offered reward. This was no doubt the truth. The round number of piastres which was the price for every head of an enemy, made many a guiltless cottager lose theirs.

The Emir Busheer was very fond of the English, and talked a great deal, when we visited him, of Sir Sydney Smith, in whose ship he had sailed several days on a cruise, and was quite delighted with the frank and generous spirit of the commander: the novelty of the expedition had left an ineffaceable impression on his mind. Of Lady H. S. he has the most unqualified admiration. She formerly came sometimes to visit him, and springing from her Arab horse, walked without ceremony into the palace, with her riding-whip in hand, and in her Mameluke dress. The old man received the queen of the East, as she has

been named, with delight. "Come, my child," he said, "to visit me whenever it is your pleasure: use no ceremony with me, for my palace is your home, and your presence is to me as the light of the sun." The regard and respect paid to this lady by the chiefs of the East, both old and young, the powerful as well as the weak, are invariable. The Cadi at Beirout spoke of her with a veneration next to what he would have used when naming the Prophet or the Sultan. The young Pacha of Acre, desperate and lawless, filling the country around with bloodshed and exactions of every kind, pays instant deference to a billet of her's. It is not boundless wealth that creates their admiration; for her income, till a handsome legacy was left her about three years ago, did not exceed 1500*l.* a year. It is not the fascination of beauty that operates so powerfully on the natives of the East; for her person is plain and masculine, and her character pure and unspotted. Inquire of a Turk respecting her conduct, and he will lift up his hand and declare her uniformly to be the most noble, virtuous, and excellent of women. Already in the vale of life, and in a state of "single blessedness," she cannot contemplate with temper the joys of domestic

union; and like our maiden queen of excellent memory, she has the most sovereign dislike to see any of her followers or attendants yoked together in matrimony.

A young man of Beirout, with whom we were acquainted, of the name of Massad, served her ladyship in the quality of dragoman. He was very clever, had been in England, and spoke its language well; he was employed to do all the commissions for Marilius in the neighbouring towns; and knowing the rogueries of his countrymen, was very useful to the establishment. He was very good-looking, and well-informed; and having handsome wages, with not a great deal to do, found his place much to his satisfaction. The only European in the establishment was a Miss W. a companion and dependant of her ladyship's. All the English servants had been shipped off, bag and baggage, with little warning, a good while before; as their mistress found their English tastes and habits so ill accorded with her Arab ones, and gave her so much annoyance, that she sent them all home, determining never to have an English servant again. It so happened, and it was perfectly natural, that young Massad and the young lady formed an attachment for each other;—in

her isolated situation there was no other object possessed of the least attraction, save the Arab scheik or the Turkish gentleman, who sometimes came to Marilius to pay their homage to its mistress; but they spoke a strange language, and their manners were too oriental for English feelings. Confiding too much in their mistress's indulgence, Massad and the young lady were imprudent enough to request her approbation of their attachment, and her consent to their being united and still retaining their situations under her roof. This announcement kindled at once her indignation: the too sanguine dragoman was bereaved of his sabre, which he had received as a present, and instantly dismissed his office and the house, with, however, a handsome present;—and the unfortunate Miss W. felt her residence afterwards less enviable than it had formerly been.

Pale and dispirited, removed from all society congenial to her wishes and feelings, her situation was not to be envied; but ere twelve months had elapsed, the scene at Marilius looked more cheerful; old grievances were forgotten; the dragoman was recalled to his situation, and "the clouds of displeasure no longer sat heavy on the brow."

The desire of some travellers to see the inmate of Marilius has been so strong as to induce them to brave the danger of a repulse. A German baron, famed for his knowledge of horses, in which he prided himself much, begged the honour of an interview; her ladyship only replied by ordering the groom to lead out her stud of horses for his inspection. An unfortunate quarrel with an eminent English traveller, who spent some weeks at her house, is assigned, and perhaps justly, as the cause of her closing her doors against her countrymen. His opinion respecting her present habits of life was too unguardedly expressed after he had quitted her residence; and his satirical observations, finding their way to England, and being thence communicated to Marilius, determined its owner to admit no more of her injudicious countrymen.

Her residence in this country was entirely the effect of accident: the vessel in which she sailed, being shipwrecked on the coast, she was so much struck with the beauty of the country and climate, as to resolve to make it her residence. Had she foreseen that a few years would rob her of her hardihood of body and

daring of mind, and confine her, nervous and dispirited, to the solitude of Marilius, she surely would never have made it her place of refuge. What resting-place can such a spot be for her powerful mind, that once took part in the highest councils of the state, during her residence with her uncle, and exercised, it is said, no small influence on the destinies of Europe? It was perhaps the total change in her situation caused by the death of that great minister; the passing from his society and confidence to that of other spirits, who assimilated but little with her own masculine and capricious mind; and also her not being on cordial terms with many of the members of her family, joined to her passion for enterprise and travel, that led her altogether to withdraw from a world whose smiles were now in part changed into coldness and indifference. On much of the society in which she then mingled, comprising the most talented and elevated characters of the day, she sometimes takes pleasure in dwelling, in terms either of keen satire or of unqualified eulogy. Her eloquence in conversation is considerable, when she is animated by the subject, though her voice is neither very melodious nor feminine; and when

roused, which is but rare, to anger, it may be said (in the eastern expression) that "her wrath is terrible."

An Englishman whom we knew at Beirout, was fortunate enough to obtain an interview, on account of his being intimate with a rich Turk, who had long been a friend and visitor of her ladyship's. The Turk wrote to request the honour, and it was immediately granted. The Englishman returned to Beirout the next day, perfectly delighted. He had arrived at Marilius in the evening, and was served with supper by the numerous retinue, according to the English style, with a table, knives, forks, &c. His turban was arranged by the major domo in the Mameluke style, and about eleven at night he was introduced to her ladyship. She was reclining on a sofa, extremely well, but plainly dressed in the Turkish fashion, with a red shawl turban on her head, slippers on her feet, a handsome sash round her waist, over which was a loose robe.

She conversed very affably, particularly on the state of the country, filled at this time with discord and bloodshed by the war between the two Pachas. She spoke of it in terms of apprehension and uneasiness, and dissuaded him strongly from prosecuting his journey to the

Syrian capital, and expressed her belief that the Turkish empire was hastening rapidly to destruction; but gave, or procured him, however, letters for the Pacha of Damascus, which were afterwards of the highest service to him.

Few prospects can be more lonely and melancholy than the one before her, of passing the remainder of her life, and closing it, in a country perpetually torn by tumults, plunders, and deeds of cruelty, with not a friend to confide in, not one bosom of affection to lean on for comfort or sympathy. Of all the ordinances of the Christian religion, an inhabitant of this country is of course obliged to live entirely destitute. In her conversation with the Englishman, she discovered the most intimate knowledge of the various governments of the East, and of their wayward policy.

The interview lasted several hours; the latter part of it, however, was a mute one on the part of the visitor, for the conversation happened to turn on the policy of England, as directed by her idolized uncle. She instantly drew, with enthusiasm, a vivid and beautiful picture of that individual, such a one as it was impossible to wish to interrupt. Start but this subject, indeed, in her company, and you may fold your arms, and sit in a posture of

fixed attention for a couple of hours, while a torrent of eloquence pourtrays the designs, the powers, and virtues of that exalted spirit. The greater part of her long night, as she never retires to rest till five in the morning, is occupied with reading, or with her numerous correspondence; for like all recluses, though cut off from the world, its news is still dear to her. Even in the intelligence and petty events of the surrounding neighbourhood, she often takes a lively interest.

Like Christina of Sweden, conscious of the powerful resources of her own mind, she looks on the scenes of past gaiety or dignity with little regret; and regards with the same disdain the manners and tastes of most of her own sex, whom she considers as in a too dependant, weak, and unimportant condition of society. Few of them, indeed, possess her strength of nerve, or capacity of enduring fatigue: an admirable horse-woman herself, it was long before she could persuade her English companion to ride *à l'amazon*, though she assured her, if she did not, she would quickly break her neck in the rugged mountain paths. This nearly chanced to be the case one day. Miss ——— narrowly escaped being thrown over a precipice, and

ever since conforms to the eastern fashion. An Arab chief, who, during one of her journeys through the desert, pursued her with his party for fifteen hours, with scarcely any halt, could not overtake her. The quarrel being afterwards made up between this tribe and the one that conducted Lady S. in a subsequent journey, they again encountered in the desert: her ladyship instantly rode up to the scheik, and demanded in an authoritative tone, how he dared pursue her on the former occasion, or presume to think of taking her. The Arab chief replied, that he well knew her rank, and that had he made so illustrious a prisoner, he expected to have obtained a large ransom, but that her speed had entirely disappointed him.

On one of the days of her residence at Palmyra, she gave a kind of fête to the Bedouins. The great scheik, with his tribe of Palmyrene Arabs, constantly resides at the ruin: their habitations are fixed near the great temple; they are very well disposed, and civil in their manners, and their young women are remarkable above all the other tribes for their beauty. It was a lovely day, and the youth of both sexes, dressed in their gayest habiliments, were seated in rows on the fragments of the

pillars, friezes, and other ruins with which the ground was covered. Her ladyship, in her eastern dress, walked among them, addressed them with the utmost affability, and ordered a dollar to be given to each. As she stood, with all that Arab array, amidst the columns of the great temple of the sun, the sight was picturesque and imposing; and the Bedouins hailed her, with the utmost enthusiasm, queen of Palmyra, queen of the desert! and in their enthusiasm, would have proceeded to confer more decided marks of sovereignty; but they were declined. They speak of her now with the utmost veneration and respect. They also retain another mark of her bounty, one which, out of regard for her countrymen, she might well have spared. The great scheik received from her a paper, in her hand-writing, in which she directs him to demand a thousand piastres of every traveller who visits the ruin. The scheik never fails to enforce this counsel, and displays the paper, with the addition, that the great lady, the queen, said that the English travellers were rich, and that they ought to pay well for the privilege of seeing Palmyra. This enormous tax, which it is impossible to escape, causes several travellers to leave Syria without seeing the finest ruin in the world.

One, indeed, of no small eminence, absolutely refused to pay it, telling the scheik, who drew the mandate from his bosom, that the great lady had no right whatever over his purse, and that she showed little wisdom in leaving such a mandate in his hands. He passed four days at Palmyra, and would have left it as wise as he came, if he had not made a compromise with the chief, and consented to pay half the sum. The Arabs, though they would not personally injure him, did not suffer him to leave the hut, and at last placed some wood and faggots round the walls, and, setting them on fire, filled the habitation of the traveller with such clouds of smoke, that he could neither breathe nor see, and was obliged to give way. This injudicious and needless written mandate from the noble visitor to the chief, will, no doubt, be handed down from scheik to scheik for many generations; and travellers for centuries to come will be doomed to see the ominous scroll produced, and the thousand piastres demanded, with the comment that it was given to their forefathers by the great lady from beyond the sea.

The old Arab soothsayer, or magician, who sometimes visits Marilius, is a singular being; his appearance, with his long beard and so-

lemn and venerable aspect, being rather equivocal. He either deludes himself or his patroness, perhaps both, for his prophecies of oriental grandeur and dominion have, not seldom, been willingly received. There is little doubt that her restless and romantic mind at times dwelt with pleasure on the idea of a power to be established in the East, of which she was to be the mistress :—a large fleet was to come from afar to aid this conquest, and her sceptre was to wave with equal glory to that of Zenobia who defended Palmyra. The Arab soothsayer has obtained considerable fame by his prophecy of the destruction of Aleppo by an earthquake, twelve months before it took place. The particulars of this prophecy, and the very words in which it was couched, have appeared in a religious publication a few months ago: they were very emphatic, and full of denunciations of wrath and terror, and struck a missionary who was at Aleppo at the time with all the force of truth. But superstition is the frequent weakness of powerful minds; the two first literary characters of the present day believing, it is said, in second sight. But the belief in nativities, or the influence of the stars, which is a prominent part of the creed of the noble owner of

Marilius, is, perhaps, still more precarious and unsatisfactory. Yet this research is pursued with eager interest and curiosity, and fills up many a solitary hour both by day and night. The particular star under whose influence some of her friends have been born has been inquired after with avidity, and one who filled at that time a high diplomatic situation in the East at a considerable distance, told me he was intreated by letter to communicate what star chanced to preside over his birth.

The tranquil and elevated site of Marilius, once a monastery but now converted into a handsome dwelling, is to be envied on a bright and beautiful night, such an one as is so often beheld in the East; the heavenly bodies, shining with excessive brilliancy, appear almost the only living and awakening objects around. No human habitation is nigh; the plain and town of Sidon are at a distance below, and no footstep dares approach the spot, except sent on a special embassy or communication. Indeed, three and twenty Arab servants, almost wholly men, are a retinue too formidable to be trifled with; and with the numerous stud of blood Arabian horses, might form an escort fit for a Pacha. These horses have either been purchased or

sent as presents by the Arab chiefs: a present not unprofitable to the owner, as the Bedouin who brings the courser is rewarded with a douceur of a thousand piastres. The generosity, indeed, of Lady H. S. knows no bounds, and is prodigiously admired by the Arabs, among whom it is considered a cardinal virtue. Extremely abstemious in her own habits, with a little tea and dry bread for breakfast, and some soup, with (the furthest that her luxury extends) a boiled chicken for dinner, the residence contains a store of the choicest wines and delicacies for her visitors. With the Arab scheik she sips coffee and smokes a pipe, seated on the carpet, and converses with oriental animation. The rich arms that are at times sent as presents to the various chiefs, are most acceptable to them; they prefer those of England to their own manufacture, but they look cold on them, except they are embossed in gold or silver. Large chests, full of English pistols and other arms, richly ornamented, are sometimes sent to Marilius; one was waiting shipment at Alexandria a few months before for the same place, and was to be accompanied by a collection of tea-cups and saucers from that port, as the old stock was nearly exhausted.

As may be imagined, Lady H. S. is not very popular with the few European ladies settled in the East. One of them, a resident at Sidon, asserted that those peculiar manners and habits would lose half their charm to their possessor, if they ceased to excite notoriety. That she chanced to reside once for some weeks in the same house with her ladyship; and never manifesting the slightest curiosity or interest respecting her, the former became uneasy and displeased, and made many and pointed inquiries who the stranger was. This was a Frenchwoman's tale, prompted a little, perhaps, by envy, though this is the last passion the life of the noble recluse need excite in the bosom of a pretty woman. Indeed, the softer sex are seldom welcome visitors at the residence. When a nobleman and his lady, during their eastern travels, went there in the expectation of being gratified with an interview with its illustrious tenant, they found she had flown a few hours before their arrival, on one of her Arab coursers, leaving orders with the housekeeper to receive the visitors with the most attentive hospitality.

Yet the door that is often closed to the rich and curious, is ever open to the poor and distressed. It would fill many pages to detail

every generous and noble action of the recluse. The sick are furnished with medicine, and the poor and wretched of the neighbourhood are never sent empty away.

If it be asked if the Orientals have derived any benefit from the residence of her ladyship among them, in point of information, or manners, &c. it may be replied in the negative. It was said at one time she was engaged in instructing and civilizing a tribe of Bedouins, and that these children of the sun were making rapid improvements. In the science of flattery, and a rooted veneration for gold and the hand that bestows it bountifully, these Syrians are equal to any of their fellow-creatures; but in all other respects they are, and will be, as the prophecy was spoken of them, "a wild and reckless people, and artful as the father of lies." The prince of the Druses received a Bible with thanks from a missionary who visited him, and a few days after sent a body of his troops to plunder one or two Greek monasteries. Perfectly tolerant in her religious sentiments, and surrounded by at least six or seven different creeds of Christianity, besides the Mussulman and the Druse, her ladyship shows no marked preference for one more than another; were it otherwise, Marilius would soon be inundated by Turkish santons, or

imauns, Maronite, Greek, or Armenian priests. The Missionaries have tried of late to engage her powerful countenance in their cause, but in vain. Of the cause of the unhappy Greeks she is a warm and decided supporter; and, more than once, she has stepped in between lawless oppression and those who were about to become its victims. Long will the English name receive additional veneration in the East on her account; and were the gates of Marilius but thrown open to the reception of her countrymen, it would be the most luxurious resting-place, and her influence the surest safeguard, in the land of the East. Yet the strict etiquette preserved there, though unfelt by the stronger, falls not so lightly on the gentler sex. Two young ladies were invited, from a former friendship to the father, who was an English gentleman, to spend a few weeks at Marilius. They were delighted at the thoughts of so rare a privilege, and set out with anxious hearts. Their reception was most kind and friendly, and the first few days passed gaily away; but ungifted with the peculiar resources of their hostess, the hours soon began to move heavily. No amusements, no change of scene, often no sound but the wind moaning through the few trees on the summit of the hill. During the greater part of the day, the only faces they

saw were Arab ones; at night, and not till then, they were admitted to an interview with her ladyship, seated *à la Turque*, in her Mameluke dress, who conversed with perfect good-humour, and ridiculed them sometimes for their effeminacies and weaknesses. They were not able to ride the mettled Arab coursers through mountain roads and passes, over which, without a skilful hand, a lady unaccustomed to the country might well break her neck. When any illustrious Turk or Arab showed his bearded face and turbaned head before the door, the two visitors, so far from having their curiosity indulged with an interview, were bidden to confine themselves closely to their chamber, and not to look through the window, lest the follower of the prophet might catch a glimpse of their features, and the strict etiquette of the place be thus violated; and they left it, as they told us after their return, with feelings like those of a nun leaving the walls of her monastery.

The other residence of Lady S. is called Mar Abbas, and is situated further in the interior, and during the winter is a preferable situation to the one near Sidon, and has more wood to shelter it. When any infectious disorder prevails on the coast, she always re-

tires there. At Jerusalem she lodged in the Catholic convent; and visited the Dead Sea and the valley of the Jordan with a strong guard of Arabs. At the lake of Tiberias, the rich old Jew, in whose house we lodged, told us, her ladyship was the only native of England whom his roof had received before: he spoke of her in high terms of admiration. She spent several days at the lake, to use the celebrated warm baths, about a mile from the town; and the natives beheld with astonishment her progress along the shores on her beautiful Arab charger, which she managed with the utmost skill. Had she lived in the days of chivalry, the East had heard the fame of more than one Clorinda. "What is your strength of arm or nerve?" she said to a young lady of my acquaintance, who visited her: "could they brave the burning heats and fatigues of the Desert, as mine have done?" It is strange her exploring spirit has never carried her to Mecca; as it is doubtful if the Turks, in the excess of their respect, would refuse her entrance, or venture to put their law in force, of decapitating the infidel who trespasses on the sacred territory. It would be a cruel and posing question to put to a Turk or Arab of the neighbourhood, whether

the "noble lady" could possibly be admitted into paradise by the law of the Koran that bars the gates against the tender sex: he would probably answer, after stroking his beard and looking dignified, "that the prophet who made the law, had power, on a particular occasion, to break it;" or, as the governor of Beirout said to us, that "we should all be true believers together by and by."

The village of Antoura, where she resided for some time on her first arrival in the country, is finely situated, with its convent, on the declivity of Mount Lebanon, and, from its situation, must be remarkably healthy. The celebrated Wortley Montague resided here during a visit he made to this country, and was delighted with the situation; although the object of his stay here was neither a laudable or honourable one. His beautiful mother would have smiled at sight of the situation of Marilius, and wondered what could make such a residence agreeable, *sans societé, sans l'amour*. There is indeed scarcely a parallel to be found of a retirement like this of Lady S. There have been a few women, and of talent, who have surrendered the manners and *agremens* of their own sex, but have cultivated assiduously the superior society, as they

called it, of the other; and some, who have rushed to religious seclusion, have found their recompense in the enthusiasm they have cherished there, and in the brilliant hopes it has inspired; but here, with no food for vanity, amidst unlettered and mindless pachas and scheiks only—cut off from the civilized world—the spirit must be powerful that can exult in such a path, and continue in it to the last in tranquillity, and without a sigh or regret!

LETTER XXII.

HAVING resolved to take a passage to Cyprus, we set sail on a fine afternoon from Beirout in a small boat, crowded with passengers, reckoning only on a passage of twenty-four hours. Four nights and five days passed over us in this wretched boat, which had no cabin but a dark hole sufficient for one person to drag himself into, and the space without was crammed with bales of merchandize. The weather was very hot, our water fell short, and the distress of the poor passengers, among whom were many women and children, was dreadful.

We were becalmed at last off a desolate part of the island, and two or three of the crew were sent on shore for some water, and in a few hours returned with a plentiful supply. The joy of the people on board was excessive,

and they drank the water tumultuously, as if they were never to drink again; those who were unable to rise lifting up their heads with rapture, while the stream was poured into their lips by others.

On the fifth day we entered the port of Larnica, and proceeded to the house of the consul for England, M. Vondiziani, a Greek, to whom we had letters of introduction. This friendly and amiable man made his house quite a home to us: he was a widower, had five sweet children, and was perfectly domestic in his habits; he allotted us apartments commanding extensive views of the country, where we were served with breakfast in the English style, and his table was covered with a variety of dishes at mid-day and at eight in the evening.

The country around Larnica is perfectly naked and rugged, and the climate sultry and unwholesome. The consuls for the different European nations reside here, and their houses are fitted up in a good style. With the exception of some patches of verdure in what are called the gardens of some of the houses, the territory around is destitute of shade, and the ground parched with heat. In the apartments

of the consul's house, the sun was excluded; but for several hours in the day the heat in the streets was insupportable.

The island was at this time in a state of deceitful tranquillity; the massacres of the Greeks were for a while partially suspended, only to be renewed with greater fury. At the consul's table each day appeared an unfortunate Greek family, who resided in his house, and received from him the utmost kindness. It consisted of a widow in the prime of life, her eldest son, a fine young man, and two or three children. The father, who was a rich Greek boyar, had been murdered, and all his effects confiscated. This poor lady was most anxious for every detail of the war, and to know if the English would assist her oppressed country.

The governor of the island was a brutal and savage character; and the Greek monks trembled at his threats to destroy and ransack their monasteries. The fathers were most unfortunately situated in this war: timid from their habits, they saw only certain destruction in store; or else girded on a sword and joined the ranks, in which they cut but a sorry figure. Several priests had been slain a short time before our arrival; and one evening, while sitting

quietly in the consul's parlour, an unhappy Greek was shot at the door, while passing along, by a Turkish soldier.

The island having been placed under the pacha of Egypt's protection, he sent a body of soldiers to defend it; who not long after mutinied for want of pay. They resolved, about two thousand in number, to march to Larnica, seize on some vessels, and embark for Egypt. The intelligence reached us at Larnica on the evening of their approach: the greatest consternation instantly prevailed; the Austrian consul shipped off his most valuable effects, and went on board with his family. As the troops would arrive in the night, a general scene of pillage and tumult was likely to take place. The consul was most alarmed for his children, two or three of whom were pretty girls; and having mustered all the arms and domestics in the upper apartment, whose windows fronted the street, we took post there before dark, assured that the Turks would not stand more than one volley from a defensive position like this; and Mons. V.'s little garrison, mustering more than a dozen people well armed, made no contemptible appearance.

Report said the mutineers were only a few miles from the town: the women were dread-

fully alarmed; but hour after hour passed away quietly, and we found in the morning that they had altered their course, and gone to Famagousta. A few stragglers only arrived, one of whom was shot in a quarrel by his comrade the same evening. At the latter town they committed several excesses, but were quieted at last by the interference of their commander, and promises of pay.

In the course of the revolution, several of the Greeks, to save their lives, had become Mahometans; among these was a rich merchant: this man we frequently met, and he invited us to visit him. He was a smooth, good-looking, and corpulent Greek, and confessed it was to save his head only that he had apostatised. It was now the fast of Ramadan, and he bitterly exclaimed against the Koran, and its absurd laws, which compelled him to fast from one sunset to the next, and this disagreed dreadfully with his habit of body. "Sixty-three times to-day, said he, have I been obliged to prostrate myself towards Mecca, and touch the ground with my forehead;"—which could have been no easy matter, from his extreme corpulence. He cursed the prophet and his paradise too. "I must put myself to torment," said the Greek, "for what I

care nothing about: and what are all his bowers and pleasures to me, while I am famishing?" Besides, the faithful had their eyes sharply upon him, and he was obliged to model his subtle face into a solemn and reverential expression, and keep from other indulgences, which mortified him more than the loss of the good cheer, for, from his own account, he was a thorough profligate.

Another Greek family were placed in a rather more tragical situation at Larnica. A certain time was allotted them to decide whether to embrace Islamism or die; the husband leaned to the former alternative, and strove to persuade all his family; but the wife was firmly resolved to adhere to the faith of her fathers, and, like many other Greek women in this warfare, showed a heroism, of which the men are too often destitute: the time allotted was not yet expired.

Cyprus, from its vicinity to the Egyptian power, the cutting off of nearly all the rich and distinguished Greeks, and the want of spirit in the remainder, was more unfortunately situated than the rest of the Greek islands; and yielded without resistance to the cruelties of its oppressors. The military force at this time dispersed over so large a space was weak; and

had a body of resolute Greeks effected a landing in any part, the island would probably have been free, at least for a time.

It was sad to see this large and beautiful island so desolate and ravaged; chateaus and their rich gardens laid waste and deserted, and their surviving possessors dependant on others for shelter and support; women, bred up in luxury, deprived of their husbands and parents; and the sons of nobles imploring refuge from strangers. Large domains of land could be bought for a trifle; and a chateau, with a garden, together with a small village on the domain, and an extensive tract of land, were offered for a few hundred pounds.

We left Larnica on a fine evening, on a tour into the interior of the island. The Consul caused his secretary and one of his servants to accompany us; so that, with the Janizary and his servant, we formed a party of nine. The Turk was a fellow of humour and good nature, and, unlike these guards in general, accommodated himself entirely to our movements.

In about two hours, after travelling over a parched plain, we came to a fine fountain, with some trees, and stopped for a short time; and towards evening arrived at a hamlet of Greek peasants, and took up our lodging in a

neat cottage. The fare the good people provided, with some additions from Larnica, furnished an excellent supper. The horses being ready to start soon after day-break, we took a simple yet luxurious breakfast in the court, and which, from its being so speedily provided, we often adopted afterwards: the new milk from the cow being placed over the fire, and a quantity of coffee thrown into it, made a repast in a few minutes, with a crust of bread, fit for an epicure.

The day was exceedingly beautiful; every day indeed was alike, and the atmosphere was so pure, that the outline of each mountain in the horizon, however distant, was traced with perfect distinctness. The way led over a plain, more verdant, however, than the one traversed the day before; and in a few hours we came to a deserted chateau, that had belonged to a wealthy Greek gentleman. It afforded a melancholy and affecting scene. The chambers were all empty, and the furniture destroyed or plundered. Through the small and rich garden ran a beautiful stream: we sat on its banks beneath the shade of the trees, and partook of some refreshment brought by a peasant, whom we found in the house, and who belonged probably to a village not far dis-

tant. The windows of the house looked over a spacious plain in front, and a range of fine mountains on the right. The owner had been murdered by the Turks; and his widow and children, some of whom were very young, were driven out to misery and dependence.

Leaving this spot, we travelled over the plain beneath a sultry sun, and saw with joy the rich and deep groves of Cytherea at a distance, which soon afforded a welcome shade. We proceeded to the house of a Greek priest, and ascending a long flight of steps, entered the garden, into which the dwelling opened. It was a sweet and retired place, full of orange and lemon trees; the fruit of the latter hung in quantities, and of an enormous size. The father seemed well pleased with our visit, and killed, not a fatted calf or kid, but a goat, which being made into soup, and two or three sorts of dishes, was served up in the corridor. This good man had a wife and family, and seemed to live in much comfort.

The village of Cytherea consists of detached cottages, each having its garden and rivulet; for so great is the abundance of streams around this spot, that they appear to flow close to every dwelling. The groves are chiefly of mulberry, orange, and lemon trees, and a

quantity of silk is produced here. Next to the gardens, the chief attraction around this spot is the picturesque and irregular chain of mountains that rises above and around it, the waving and rocky outline of which is beautiful. Not far from the father's was the handsome dwelling of a Greek boyar, the coolness of whose garden and rushing stream almost invited us to become purchasers, and settle in this place, where the climate is healthy, and free from the scorching heats of the coast. The possessor of this mansion had been beheaded a short time before, and it was left desolate: the Turks would have sold it for a trifle, and an Englishman might have enjoyed it in perfect safety.

In the evening we visited the greater part of the scattered village: one seldom sees a more inviting and attractive spot; and we ascended, about sunset, one of the mountains to the west. The light was nearly faded when we had gained the top; yet we had a fine view of the sea, the coast beneath, and the high shores of Caramania on the opposite side, but it soon became indistinct, and we had to find our way back nearly in darkness. The descent over the rocks was very annoying, and we regained the priest's home with no little pleasure, and being parched with heat, had

the table placed in the garden beneath the orange and lemon trees, and plucking the fresh fruit, drank insatiably of excellent lemonade. To lie down to sleep beneath the deep foliage was a luxury; and the perfume was wafted by the cool night-breeze around us.

We took leave of our host next morning, who, if subsequent accounts are correct, possessed not his sweet garden and cottage much longer, but was soon after numbered with his murdered countrymen. Ascending the mountains, the path soon became wild and rocky; and in a few hours we beheld the monastery of Chrysostom on the declivity above, and wound up a steep ascent to it. It is overhung on three sides by lofty mountains, and looks down in front on an extensive plain, in the midst of which is the city of Nicosia. The convent is very ancient, and contains about a dozen Greek monks; whose larder did not appear to be very well provided, as we soon found to our cost. They had abundance of room and solitude, and could inhabit only a part of their edifice. The church is paved with marble, and the walls adorned with the usual daubings of Greek saints, male and female, who must be all of one family, from their marvellous likeness to each other.

Whatever might have been the former reputation of the convent, it is little resorted to now, and its finances are probably very low. It was founded by a rich Cypriot lady, some centuries ago; and beneath the portico of the church is her tomb, over which a lamp was kept always burning. Two slaves, or domestics, to whom their mistress was strongly attached, are laid in the same tomb, according to her wish in her last moments. It is a wild and tranquil spot to be buried in, where the mountain-winds breathe fresh over her grave.

In the garden of the monastery are cypress-trees of immense size and beauty, exceeding all we ever beheld; and a fountain breaks away, and descends over the rocks into the plain beneath. These monks lead a cheerless life, being under a vow of poverty and chastity, besides other severe rules; for which they have, probably, to thank their lady-foundress.—On the brink of a steep mountain, that rises to a great height over the convent, are the colossal ruins of a castle, whose position must have been almost invulnerable. It was built as a place of defence against the oppressions of the Knights Templars, at the time they possessed the island. A long, steep, and most toilsome path leads up to it;

but the prospect from the summit, as well as the remains themselves, amply repay the trouble. A number of small and ruinous chambers, and massive walls, spread over the face of these craggy rocks, have a singular effect; and the view extends over the greater part of the island, the immense plain that intersects it, and its mountain border, with the coast below, and the sea and shores of Asia beyond.

On returning to the convent, the good fathers, who never eat flesh themselves, soon after introduced different parts of a goat for our dinner; but he must have been some venerable attendant on the convent, or else bound under the same laws of self-denial, for it was impossible to partake of a single morsel, and we bade the monk make us rid of it. However, he produced some excellent honey, for which Cyprus is famous, as well as for its wines.

In the evening we rode down the mountain and over the plain, entering the gates of Nicosia before sunset. Having sent a letter of introduction to the Greek archbishop of the island, he immediately provided an excellent house and garden for our residence, and after dark honoured us with a visit. Cyprian, so

cruelly murdered not long after our departure, was a fine and dignified looking man. He came to accompany us to supper at his palace; for which we soon after set out, lighted by a number of torches. The archbishop walked at the head, and his priests followed in order, according to their dignity. His table was sumptuously spread, and the cookery exquisite; the Cyprus wine of the oldest quality. Every morning he sent us breakfast in the English style, which was served by his domestics; at mid-day we dined at the palace; and every evening he came to converse for an hour, and then conducted us to his home, in procession, as before, to sup and spend the evening. His kindness and attentions were excessive, at the very time that he was labouring under constant alarm and agitation of mind.

What situation could be more affecting and distressing? Chosen to his high office by the Porte, as well as by his people, he formerly possessed great temporal influence in the island, even beyond that of the governor, till the breaking out of the revolution caused it to be taken from him. For some time, he had been compelled to look on the massacres of his countrymen and the plunder of their pro-

perty, and stifle every expression of feeling. The oppressed and menaced Greeks often sought him for refuge; but, watched vigilantly by the Turkish authorities, he dared not afford protection to any, save by his private charities, for which he had numberless objects. But now affairs were assuming a darker and more threatening aspect, as it regarded his own safety: he had been frequently insulted by the Turkish soldiers; the governor had spoken in abusive terms of him. "My death is not far distant," said Cyprian to us; "I know they only wait for an opportunity to despatch me!"—and this was very evident.

One evening as we sat at supper, he was called out by one of his attendants respecting a message from the governor. We accompanied him to another apartment, where the soldier waited, who spoke in the most insulting terms: the calmness of the archbishop forsook him, and he replied with great warmth, refusing to obey the message. The soldier departed, and we returned to the table, but its harmony was completely destroyed. The ecclesiastics looked pale and terrified, and Cyprian sought by every effort to encourage them: he was deeply agitated and affected; but his fine features were lighted up with a

noble energy, as he dwelt on the cruelties of their oppressors, and protested his determination no longer to submit to such aggravated insults, at the same time that he warned his hearers to prepare for the worst.

No one interrupted him, for it seemed like the farewell address of this excellent pastor to his trembling people; who felt, no doubt, that when the high and noble spirit that had guarded and consoled them, took its flight, they would fall a helpless prey into the hands of their enemies. The lamp-light, falling on the group of listening ecclesiastics, and on the remarkably fine countenance of their leader, whose long white beard descended nearly to his girdle, rendered this a scene not easily to be forgotten. It grew late, and we waited with anxiety the return of the soldier, who would probably bring a fiercer message from that wretch the governor; but, to the satisfaction of all, he returned no more.

Highly eminent for his learning and piety, as well as for his unshaken fortitude, Cyprian was the last rallying point of the wretched Greeks; and his frequent remonstrances and reproaches had rendered him very obnoxious to the Turkish authorities. He often shed tears when he spoke to us of the slaughter of

his countrymen. We asked him why, in the midst of such dangers, he did not seek his own safety, and leave the island; but he declared he would remain to afford his people all the protection in his power to the last, and would perish with them.

The garden attached to the residence afforded a very pleasing walk amidst the burning heat of the day; having plenty of shade, and fountains. The climate of Nicosia, from its situation in a wide and flat plain, is oppressively hot, and it was scarcely possible to walk in the streets in the middle of the day. The construction of the houses and streets being more Venetian than Turkish, the city does not enjoy the shade and coolness of most other Oriental towns. It is surrounded by a very strong wall, in which are three handsome gates.

We went one day, by the governor's permission, to visit the large and splendid mosque of the city, and were attended by a fierce and brutal Sclavonian soldier, who had been the executioner of the unfortunate Greek nobles, in the great square, a short time before. This mosque was formerly the Christian church of St. Sophia; it was built by the Venetians in the Gothic style, and consists of three aisles, form-

ed by lofty pillars of marble. Around are the tombs of princes, of knights templars, and Venetian nobles. Every vestige of the Christian worship was destroyed when the Turks stormed the city in the fifteenth century; but it has been impossible to give it the air of a mosque. The imaun's pulpit is erected where once, probably, stood the altar, and the walls are covered with inscriptions from the Koran, in large letters of gold: the pavement is of marble. At the time we visited it, the imaun was seated a few steps above the floor, on which sat a circle of Turkish gentlemen, each with the Koran in his hand, to whom he was expounding with much earnestness, and they listened very attentively.

This noble edifice conveys an impressive idea of earthly vicissitudes. The ancient kings of Cyprus were crowned within its walls, where also their ashes were laid: the warriors of the Temple have their tombs here, and many a haughty Venetian senator: but now the Turk tramples on their ashes, and invokes the Prophet over the graves of those who shed their blood in defiance of his name.

It is difficult to form an idea of the population of the town at present,—so many of the

Greeks have fled or been sacrificed, or keep concealed in their houses.

We went to the palace to have an audience of the governor: he was absent in the country, but his chief officer, a young and handsome man, received us with great politeness. Some of the apartments of the palace were very elegantly furnished, with a double row of windows on three sides of the walls, for the admission of air. Refreshments were served, and the Turk assured us of perfect safety in travelling to any part of the island, and requested, that, if we wanted any thing, we would make it known to him. The palace stands in the great square, in the midst of which is a beautiful fountain: it was here that the cruel execution took place, of the Greek nobles and merchants. The governor sent to inform them, that he had just received despatches from Constantinople, which not only assured them of protection and safety, but granted them some additional privileges; and he invited them, from different parts, to attend at his palace on a certain day, to hear these documents read. Too credulously trusting to the governor's professions, almost all the principal Greeks in the island assembled, and were admitted into the chamber of audience, from

which they were almost instantly conducted by a passage, one after the other, into the square without, where the sight of a strong guard, and the executioner with his naked sabre in his hand, revealed at once the base treachery practised on them. The latter, who was a Sclavonian soldier, boasted to us of his dexterity in the execution, for he had struck off every one of their heads with a single blow of the sabre. The father of the family who found refuge at the consul's at Larnica, was among the number. The unhappy men bore their fate with singular resignation, and submitted their necks to the blow without a murmur or complaint. Their houses and effects, lands and villages, were instantly seized and confiscated, and their families rendered desolate! It is not easy to estimate the misery occasioned by this sudden and cold-blooded cruelty.

The archbishop described this scene, which was quite recent; and the anguish of his feelings was bitterly augmented on the following day, when the Sclavonian soldier waited on him and demanded a reward. Cyprian asked for what? The other answered, because he had put the archbishop's countrymen to death with so little pain, having beheaded each at a

single blow, and that he deserved a recompense. But this wretch had been richly paid before; as he affirmed on our way to the mosque; that he had received a certain sum of the governor for every head.

While at Nicosia, we passed some part of every day in visiting the Greek families, with the consul's secretary, and were always received with the most attentive politeness. They, in general, lived retired, and many of their residences were handsome, opening into a pleasant garden, and surrounded with a corridor; the interior was furnished in the Turkish style. The women of the family were always present, their long tresses unconfined, of a dark colour, as well as their eyes; their complexion was seldom fair. One of these ladies, the wife of a merchant who was ill, was a remarkably intelligent and clever woman: she sometimes sat with us in the corridor, and conversed with deep feeling on the distresses of her people. Her husband, to save his life, and his family from ruin, had assumed the turban, and then every para of his property became as secure as in a fortress.

Coffee, sherbets, and wines of the finest quality, were introduced on these occasions. One species of the latter, forty years old, was exquisite.

The often boasted beauty of the women of Cyprus has long ceased to exist: they are now a plain race; the Grecian cast of features in some measure survives, but the form of symmetry, slender and elegant, is looked for in vain. It is, perhaps, doubtful how far the women of ancient Greece were a generally handsome race; the statues which survive might be the *beau ideal* of the sculptor, or rather an assemblage of the beauties of various women, than the possession of any single one. Whenever this exquisite beauty really existed, it became the theme of the poet, and the subject of the painter, who lavished all their powers in the description, which would hardly have been the case if beauty was the common or frequent gift. Immured as they were in the seclusions of their own walls, their lives and minds in general insipid and uncultivated, their society must have been, in some degree, regarded with a similar esteem and respect by the intellectual Greeks as the Ottoman ladies are by the Turkish lords of the present day. Another circumstance, unfavourable to the growth or preservation of beauty in the Greeks, was, that they confined their connexions chiefly to their own country, and did not generally intermarry with other nations. It is

evident, that the personal advantages the Turks possess over other nations, are exclusively owing to their taking wives from all countries; Arab, Grecian, and Persian blood all flow in the veins of an Ottoman, and conspire to make him the handsomest of human beings.

One afternoon, a messenger came to invite us to an audience of the governor, who was returned. He was sitting on a cushion, in a small and cool apartment, and was a most ferocious and savage looking fellow. He had none of the gentlemanly and dignified manners which generally characterize Turks of rank. We were scarcely seated, before he broke out in furious terms against the Greeks, on whom he lavished the foulest epithets. He abused the excellent Cyprian; and bitterly menaced a Greek monastery on the sea-shore, a few leagues from the city: it would make an excellent post, he said, for his soldiers, and those dogs should not possess it long. This convent, in a noble situation, was inhabited by a few poor monks, and during our stay in the city some soldiers entered it, and grossly insulted and beat one or two of the fathers, and plundered whatever they could lay their hands on. Not long after our departure, it was attacked and taken possession of by the troops,

and all the fathers were murdered. The behaviour of the governor during our interview with him was more like that of a wild beast than a man; he evidently looked forward with delight to the heaping fresh cruelties on the wretched Greeks.

On leaving him, we visited the General of the Egyptian troops, sent by Mahmoud Ali to secure the island. He was seated in a small and beautiful kiosque, in the middle of the garden; the roof, in the form of a cupola, was light and gilded, and the windows, which looked into the garden, were surrounded by a number of fine trees. This commander was an elderly man, with a dissolute, yet inanimate countenance; he was attended by several of his officers: he conversed freely, and asked if England was not as hot as Cyprus; the air at this time was quite oppressive. The pipes brought by the attendants were very richly ornamented, and the napkins of purple silk, flowered with silver. The chibouques we smoked at the palace every day were splendidly enamelled, and valued at thirty guineas each; those of the general were little less valuable. We quitted this chief with pleasure, and returned to the archbishop's, who gratified us, after dinner, with an exhibition of sword-playing.

Two men, armed with sword and target, and who were habited like mountaineers, and of a wild aspect, displayed considerable skill in attacking and warding off each other's blows for some time: the shield was of the size and form used by the Highlanders in former times.

The church of the Greek convent at Nicosia is adorned with costly ornaments, particularly a small image of the Virgin, almost covered with precious stones. Demetrie, who was a bigoted Greek when he joined us, had lost so much of his intolerance by associating with Michel, that he warned those around him, to our no small amusement, not to put faith in idols, such as this splendid Virgin. An old Greek, who stood by, raised his hands and eyes in utter astonishment at such blasphemous discourse.

We took leave, at last, of the excellent Cyprian, whose fate, as it was easy to perceive, was near at hand. He gave us his blessing, and requested us to remember, and carry to our country, the details of his sad and melancholy situation. Indeed, he appeared weary of his life: many of his ecclesiastics having been executed almost before his eyes, others imprisoned, or plundered of all they possessed,

and the remainder subjected, with himself, to constant insults and persecutions.

Leondias, son of the late Vicar, was seized, and suffered cruel tortures during several days, to compel him to reveal the place where the nephew of the Archbishop was concealed. This young man, Theseus by name, had bribed the executioners sent to arrest him; and, having paid large sums to some of his chief enemies, succeeded in saving himself by flight from Nicosia, into some of the remote parts of the island. Leondias, who was an old man, either not knowing or refusing to tell the place of his concealment, expired at last, after enduring extreme tortures. The prelate was filled with anguish at the unhappy event.

It was not long afterwards that the perfidious governor invited Cyprian to summon his chief ecclesiastics, saying that he wished to impart to them some intelligence which particularly concerned their safety and welfare, and requesting an immediate interview. All the clergy who were summoned to attend, were filled with suspicion of some treacherous design; but all hope of escape, or of avoiding this assembly, was vain, as the island was filled with the troops of the pacha of Egypt.

But these unfortunate ecclesiastics hoped, that by offering all that remained of their property, they might satisfy the rapacity, and appease the fury, of the governor.

The next day, the prelate and his devoted flock were assembled in the Turkish palace, in the great square of Nicosia; when the governor, having placed guards at the gates and in all the passages, ordered the massacre to begin. Cyprian, in this trying moment, behaved with uncommon courage and dignity; he demanded of the governor, what crime these ill-fated men were guilty of, that they should suffer so dreadful a fate; recounted the spoliations and insults they had already endured, declared their entire innocence, and that, if nothing but blood would satisfy the governor's cruelty, he was ready to shed his own rather than they should perish.

The Turk returned a short and brutal reply; and the bishop's self-devotion only accelerated his own destruction. Many insulting questions were put to him; but he declared he had always served the sultan with perfect integrity, who, he now found, had deserted him, and given him up to the malice of his enemies. He requested a few moments to spend in prayer. By this time, his beloved people lay murdered

around him, and he knelt down amidst their dead bodies, and commended his spirit into the hands of God. His head was then struck off, and he died without a murmur, evincing the same serenity and exalted piety, which through life had endeared him to all his people.

Filled with horror at the death of their revered prelate, many of the wretched Greeks of both sexes took refuge in the churches; but these retreats were soon violated by the infuriated Turks, and the pavement streamed with blood. The altar itself did not protect those who clung to it from violation; and the dreadful scenes of Scio, although to a smaller extent, were acted over again on those fatal days at Nicosia!

LETTER XXIII.

LEAVING Nicosia in the morning of a beautiful day, we travelled through a country that had little interesting in its appearance, till, in the afternoon, we came to the small plain and village of Dale, the ancient Idalium, and gladly sought shelter from the heat in one of the cottages. Michel brought a small sheep for our evening's repast, which did not prove too much to satisfy so large a company, increased by two or three of the inhabitants. In the mean time, the good cottagers set before us some delicious honey, and a preparation of cream.

As soon as the heat was in some measure abated, we sallied out to explore the neighbourhood, which is very beautiful, shaded by a variety of small groves, and abounding in fragrant shrubs. A fine stream, on the banks of which the village is built, runs through the

plain. The soil is excessively rich, though only partially cultivated. A large and confused heap of ruins, the remains of the ancient city, are on the plain, at about a mile from the village; but not a column or fragment possessing any beauty, is left to tell of its former magnificence. A lofty eminence, on the right, is covered with remains of a similar kind, but more massive in their appearance: a circular wall, in spite of its decayed state, may be distinctly traced. The view over the plain from the summit of this hill is uncommonly fine; a more delightful and superb site for a city can scarcely be imagined. We watched the sun going slowly down on its groves and stream with great delight, and then bent our way to our rude habitation.

Near the foot of this hill, in a most lonely spot, and in a wretched cottage, lived a family of lepers. These unfortunate people were avoided by all the other inhabitants, who dreaded to come near their dwelling. The disease was hereditary; for every one of this numerous family was afflicted with it. Some of them stood at the door, and looked the pictures of sadness and solitude. They would be starved, did not some of the people who lived in the plain bring food occasionally, and place

it at a short distance from the cottage. So great is the horror entertained of this disease, that the Mosaic law is fulfilled to the letter, of thrusting them out from all society, without the hope of ever returning to it.

Returning to our cottage, by the river side, we found the sheep ready to be served up, cooked in half a dozen different ways, and accompanied by some very good Cyprus wine. The table was spread in the court, and the air was now delightfully cool. The twilight at this season of the year (June) was longer than it is often thought to be in eastern climates, affording us excellent light for nearly three quarters of an hour. Some of our party danced in high glee to a guitar, played by one of the natives, till the lateness of the hour induced us to retire to our rude couch.

Early the next morning, after a hasty breakfast, we took our departure from the pleasant environs of Idalium, and bent our way towards Larnica. Some parts of the country were romantic; particularly a long and winding defile, on each side of which the rocks rose precipitately; and a monastery perched on the top of a small and conical hill, that was perfectly bare, was on the right. In the afternoon, we

came to Larnica, and the hospitable home of the Consul.

It was now time to think of proceeding to Greece, as Cyprus became every day more and more a prey to tumults and massacres. But we waited some days in vain for a passage to the Morea: it was a dangerous destination, and no vessel was likely to undertake it.

The new superior of the Catholic convent at Jerusalem arrived here on his way: he was a good-natured, cheerful monk, and preached on the Sunday an eloquent sermon, in Italian, in the convent chapel. He seemed to like his destination uncommonly well. So fond are these ecclesiastics of power, that many of them would go again to the rocks and caves of the Thebais, to have dominion over their brethren.

Our resources for amusement at Larnica were very few; the occasional visits to the families extended only to sitting for an hour on the divan, or beneath the trees in the garden, and the refreshment of a cup of coffee, or a glass of Cyprus wine. The Consul, though a Greek, and perfectly secure beneath the protection of the English Government, would most gladly have left the island with his children, to place them out of danger during the

present unhappy state of affairs. His eldest daughter, a fine young woman, was married to a merchant of good property in the town, with whom she appeared to live very happily: we passed a very pleasant evening at their house. The Consul had a covered caleche, of curious appearance, in which we sometimes drove during the sultry hours of the day, and passed some hours in a sort of coffee-house, chiefly to enjoy the cool breezes from the sea, beside which it stood.

Demetrie, Mr. G.'s servant, drove his bargains here to vast advantage; he was a merchant whenever opportunity offered; and he never omitted to embrace it. When at Jerusalem, he carried to the holy sepulchre a large heap of necklaces of beads, and crosses, and laid them on the sacred marble, that they might be rendered precious, and have the incense sprinkled on them. These he was sure to sell among his countrymen at home at a very high price. Milk of the Virgin, relics of all kinds, were treasured up with the same irreverent purpose. But he was rigid in all his observances, and contended stoutly for the excellence of the Greek faith, though he confessed himself to be a desperate sinner, and even doubted sometimes if the saints

would be able to do any thing for him.—He contrived, while at Larnica, to buy a large quantity of wine at a very low price, of a young Greek, whose father had been beheaded some time before. The merchant declined parting with his wine so cheaply; but Demetrie completely frightened him into it, by declaring he was servant to some Lords Inglese, who would not be trifled with in this manner, and who had power to have his head taken off, as his father's had been, and with as little ceremony.

An Ionian vessel, bound to Trieste, afforded me an excellent opportunity of visiting the Morea, as the captain engaged, for a handsome douceur, to deviate from his course, and put me on shore at Navarino. Mr. G. resolved to visit Constantinople; and a large Austrian ship, that lay in the harbour of Famagousta, being about to sail for that city in a few days, he engaged a passage; but the Ionian brig was ready to depart first, and we parted with deep regret, having passed through various and trying scenes with the greatest delight, and with a harmony that scarcely ever experienced a moment's interruption.

It was a lovely evening when I went on board, and we sailed the same night in the

confident expectation of a passage of only four or five days. But never were hopes more miserably disappointed. We had on board a strange assemblage of passengers, and an odd cargo. There were eight fine Arabian horses, sent as a present by a rich Jew-merchant of Aleppo, to the Emperor of Austria, and two or three servants to take care of them. Owing partly to the extreme heat of the weather, these animals collected clouds of large flies about them, which also found their way into every part of the ship. Two Franciscan priests, who had been sent to Jerusalem from Italy with a supply of money to the Catholic convent, were on their way back to Rome. They were good-natured men, very bigoted; and having never been on a journey before, they were heartily tired, and longed to be back in their convent. They provided for the flesh, however, even amidst more important concerns, having brought a large stock of fowls and some excellent wine. A rich Albanian gentleman, with three or four attendants, gave a variety to the scene: he was a handsome man; and had long resided in the Turkish dominions, but had now resolved to go to Trieste, and put his property in greater safety. He and his servants wore the Albanian dress,

with a poniard and pistols in their sash; they were wild and joyous fellows. There were, also, an unfortunate Servian and his wife, who had travelled an immense distance from their country on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. I had seen this man in the latter city, where he requested to join our party to the Dead Sea, when we expected a guard from the governor to go by the regular route. So great was the Servian's enthusiasm when he saw the holy sepulchre, that he gave forty pounds to the priests, which he could very badly spare. Several Greeks had obtained a passage, on finding the vessel was to touch at Navarino. These men were going to fight for their country; one or two of them were fine young men: they all wore a long poniard concealed beneath the right arm, the point being level with the elbow joint, and the handle with the wrist. One of them had a guitar, which, though he played but rudely, proved a great resource to us afterwards.

But the greatest curiosity of all was Demetrio, a Sclavonian, coming from pilgrimage also. He had been servant to the Armenian merchant, who died in Jerusalem. The convent took possession of his effects, and refused to pay the domestic his wages, but recommended him to another of the pilgrims, who pro-

cured him a passage in this vessel. Demetrio was a very little man, with a nose and chin as sharp as a hatchet, and his head covered by an old hat that had lost all its brim. He had a singularly solemn expression of countenance, had the reputation of being very devout, and would seat himself for hours in the stern, with his face turned towards Heaven, or cast on the waters with a mortified look, as if he despised all earthly concerns. He was sometimes very officious in serving me. It was Lent time; and, though the poor fellow was occasionally half starved, so strict was he, that he would never drink any of my tea and coffee, because an egg was used with them in lieu of milk. He would take the basin offered him, filled with this beverage, in his hand, and gaze at it with a longing eye, but it was utterly lost to him: never did it approach his lips—it was Lent time, and Demetrio would have suffered any extremity rather than touch any thing defiled with an egg. "Thank God!" he was often heard to exclaim, "that I have seen the Holy City!"

We went on very well for two days; and the night was so fine and tempting, that I had my mattress laid on the deck, but was awoke soon after morning-light by a high

wind, and a violent pitching of the vessel; and from that time misfortune never left us. Baffling winds were succeeded by calms, that lasted several days, when the ship lay motionless on the water, and not a breath of air was to be felt. The heat during these calms was very oppressive, and obliged us to seek shelter beneath awnings on deck. The captain was evidently ignorant of the navigation of this part of the Mediterranean, as we were at one time in view of the coast of Caramania, and again caught a glimpse of some distant isle. A hard gale came on afterwards, that obliged us to drive under bare poles, and lasted a day and night. Towards evening, we passed near a rocky isle, precipitous on every side, and uninhabited, over which the sea broke furiously.

Week after week passed in this way, and we found ourselves drawing little nearer to our destination. The worst misfortune was, that a great many of the passengers had laid in a stock of provisions for a few days only, and it speedily began to fall short. The fowls of the two fathers were lodged in the large boat on the deck, and one or two would sometimes disappear in the course of the night. One of the monks, every morning, the moment he turned out of his birth below, ran on deck

to count over the fowls; and when he found one or two missing, he made a loud and sad lamentation, declaring they should soon have nothing to eat, and accusing one or another of the crew, who all declared their innocence. Every morning and evening they recited their prayers in a loud voice on deck, and often disputed on religious points; but, when the storm commenced, they were excessively frightened; kept themselves in the cabin, and called on the saints in a piteous manner, declaring that the Devil had brought them into their present condition. At each roll of the vessel in the plough of the waves, "O santa Virgine!" cried Father Pietro—"O santissima! we shall lose ourselves." One saint followed another;—while Father Giuseppe, on whom a large trunk had been overturned, groaned heavily, and we missed him for two or three days, during which he had secreted himself in the hold, where he kept praying without ceasing, divided between his faith and his fears, but still rejoicing, that, though a great sinner, he had seen Jerusalem.

A dead calm, of many days continuance, followed this storm; during which the evenings were delightful, and the sunsets full of beauty. The hours then passed more gaily

away: the Albanian and his servants, forming into a circle, danced their war-dance to the guitar; the Greeks followed in the dance of their own country; one or two sung, and others formed parties for conversation. The Servian was the most unhappy of all: during the bad weather he sat on the deck, weeping like a child, and exclaiming he never should see Servia again. He would receive no consolation; even his visit to the sepulchre had lost all its charms; his wife he scolded and upbraided, when she attempted to comfort him; and then she sat by his side for hours, without uttering a word, the very picture of misery. Indeed, adversity, instead of riveting the chains of affection, seemed to sever these unfortunate pilgrims from each other. Many of the poorer passengers would have been nearly starved, their provisions being exhausted, as the voyage had now lasted nearly three weeks, had not some who were better provided assisted them.

The Albanian was very generous on this occasion, and also offered a poor, yet haughty Greek, who appeared to have seen better times, a present of fifteen piastres, who refused to accept of less than fifty. This man had retired every day to a secluded place on

the deck with his pittance of bread and cheese, his only meal during the day; and when that was consumed, he never uttered a murmur, or the slightest request to any one who could have befriended him. The pride of this man was intense; but it was mournfully humbled afterwards. One day, during my residence at Tripolizza, walking through the streets, a pale and wan-looking man accosted me, and smiled as he spoke of the wretched voyage we had passed in the same ship; and in his emaciated features I discovered, with difficulty, the Greek, whose demeanour on board I had often admired. He had fancied his miseries would be at an end when he came among his countrymen; but his pride plunged him in a worse condition than ever. Too haughty to work, and too delicate to take his musket and join the ranks, his countrymen, who had been kind to him at first, had at last totally neglected him. Hunger and wretchedness were both preying on him then, and he was in his own land without a friend.

At last, to our infinite joy, we drew near the island of Rhodes. We had seen it at a distance two or three times before, but it only tantalized us: one evening, in particular, when

the sea was perfectly calm, the last beams of day had lingered on its high hills with a splendour that made us long to be there. We now gazed on its palm and orange groves, its green slopes and summer-houses, with exquisite pleasure: our past privations were forgotten in a moment. The Captain was in much fear lest the Turks should visit his ship; as they would have probably seized and carried off the Greeks, who were going to join their countrymen in the Morea, and fight for their liberty: he, therefore, kept them close, and would not allow one to set his foot on shore.

I shall never forget the transition from that crowded wretched ship, filled with flies and a stifling heat, where sickness and disappointment had been our constant companions, to the rich shores of Rhodes, the loveliest isle in the Mediterranean. We walked with rapture in the shade of the gardens, devoured the oranges without moderation, and entering a coffee-house, seated ourselves beside a tall fountain, that fell with an incessant murmur.

After some time, we went to the Catholic convent, a building in the middle of a garden, and inhabited only by one elderly father, a Spaniard. The two Franciscan priests from

Jerusalem accompanied me: they were anticipating a most affectionate reception from their brother in the faith, who was of the same order. The old monk, knowing that he never lost any thing by entertaining Englishmen, received me with much profession of hospitality, but looked very indifferently upon the two pilgrim fathers. We found out afterwards, he was a *bon vivant*, and a voluptuary, but he had a very stern and keen cast of countenance. He ordered a fowl and fried eggs for my dinner; and, to prevent the two priests from partaking of any part of it, he set some raw salted fish, with some bread and vinegar, before them, to console their stomachs after so long a voyage. Indeed, he evidently wished them on board, or at the bottom, rather than within his walls, as it was only for the love of the Virgin or St. Peter, and that would not enable him to touch any cash. The fowl at last made its appearance, with the eggs covered with a quantity of soft sugar; and with the assistance of some of the red wine of Rhodes, and some excellent fruit, furnished a good repast.

We afterwards walked round the fortifications of the city, built by the Knights of St. John, and defended by them with such obsti-

nate valour against the Turks, in the sixteenth century. The walls are of immense strength, and flanked by a number of towers, some of which are in a ruinous condition; but the Turks trust entirely to the defences themselves, which are not manned, or mounted with any cannon. The remains of the palace of the Grand Master possess some magnificence, and prove how luxuriously and splendidly the knights lived in this seat of their empire. The church of St. John is now a spacious mosque, and has a rather naked appearance. The gates and portals of the walls of the city are of great thickness and strength, and the faithful may, without any great difficulty, imagine the place invulnerable to any foe likely at present to come against them. Some pillars and ancient marbles, which have, however, little beauty, yet remain in the government-house, or, more properly, the ruins of it.

The appearance of the town is more regular and clean than that of most Oriental cities. The width of the streets and the foot pavement by the sides, prove that they still retain the form given them by their ancient possessors; and a great many of the houses preserve their European aspect. The Jews have their particular quarter of the town, which is

a narrow street; and the quarter of the Greeks is much larger and cleaner. In one of the streets there is a row of trees on each side, which have a very pleasing appearance. Some of the coffee-houses are handsome. It was the first day of the feast of Beiram, and they were crowded with well-dressed Turks, who were extremely civil. They obliged us, however, to wait above an hour outside the gate, which they would not open till the afternoon prayers in the mosque were over. The small harbour or basin of Rhodes is very fine and convenient; the rocks approach so near on each side, that scarcely more than one ship can enter at a time: the water within is only deep enough for merchant vessels. The houses stand close to the water's edge, round part of this harbour; and the quays, on which grow some fine trees, afford an agreeable, but short promenade. Tradition says, the Colossus stood at the entrance of this basin, with its feet on the rocks on each side.—But one of the chief charms of Rhodes, is its superb climate. The air is pure and healthy, and few diseases are known; the heat of the weather is seldom oppressive, being cooled by the westerly winds, which blow during the greater part of the year. It is an old saying, that the sun shines

at Rhodes every day in the year; and there is scarcely ever known a day so cloudy or cheerless, that the sun does not clear the heavens, and bless the isle with his rays for some hours at least. The high mountains on the coast of Caramania, only a few leagues distant, add to the scenery. The town rises gradually from the shore, in a kind of amphitheatre; and the walk on its massive walls is very commanding.

The Chargés-d'affaires for France and Austria reside there, where they can have little or no society, save a few of the more intelligent Greeks, as there are no European merchants in the town. The Frenchman was a very amiable and lively young man, of genteel family, and only nineteen years of age; yet he appeared to like his situation very well. At the Austrian's, we met with the captain of an English merchant-ship: he was an instance of the many unjust interpositions of his countrymen in aid of the Turks; of which the Greeks have complained so much. He had carried two cargoes of corn to the relief of the garrison of Patras, and was now engaged to carry a body of Turkish troops to fight against the Greeks in the Isle of Candia. The case was rather pressing; the governor had no Turkish vessels in which to embark them, and he had

paid the Englishman a high price for the business. The latter held a large purse of money in his hand, which he shook with high glee, saying it was the sum he had just received for taking the Turkish soldiers to Candia. He set sail that evening; and walking near the harbour, we met these fellows hastening down to the shore, in order to embark: they were near three hundred.

In the evening we returned to the convent, and its solitary tenant, who seemed to be like a Grand Seignor in the place, and to have only his own sovereign will to consult. We took a turn with him through part of the town, where he was greeted by many of his small flock with smiles and recognitions; with the women he appeared to stand particularly well. But at supper the old gentleman quite forgot himself: he abused, in a strain of the utmost bitterness, the upholders of the Spanish Revolution, as children of the devil, and lost everlastingly. By their means, he said, all true religion was vanishing from the earth; and he had been peculiarly shocked lately by the irreverent behaviour of two Spaniards, who had landed and come to his chapel while he was performing mass, and which he imputed entirely to the progress of the new sentiments. The good

father poured forth his anathemas with such ardour, and drank his Rhodian wine with such good will, that he soon became quite tipsy, to the great scandal of his two brethren, the pilgrims. They were directed by him to sleep that night in a passage, where one got a sofa, and the other lay down on the floor, while the Englishman was indulged with a decent apartment and comfortable bed. The next day, the weather was beautiful, and the sun shone from a cloudless sky; yet, although it was the month of June, the heat was so tempered by the sea-breezes, that it was not oppressive.

The country-houses of the Turks are mostly without the walls of the town, situated on declivities which shelve down to the water's edge. They are surrounded by gardens of various kinds of fruit-trees, among which there are always fountains, gushing with a luxurious and lulling sound. The houses, from their elevated site, command a delightful view of the bay, and are the favourite and constant retreats of the richer Turks. They extend for two or three miles along the sides of the hills, which rise gently from the water.

Much of the scenery in the interior of the island is of the most romantic kind. Wild

and lonely valleys, where the rose and myrtle spring in profusion, open into the sea, and are inclosed by steep mountains on every side. The greater part of the island is uncultivated; and the number of the villages in the interior is small: pomegranate and fig-trees abound here, as well as peach-trees, but the fruit they produce is very inferior in flavour to those of Europe. The island is supposed to contain thirty thousand inhabitants, two thirds of whom are Turks, and is near forty leagues in circumference; but so small a portion of the soil is cultivated, that it scarcely raises corn sufficient for its own support: wine is the only other produce of the soil of any consequence, and of this very little is exported.

But Rhodes is one of the cheapest places in the world to live in. One may not be able to procure here a variety of meats; yet, such as there is, sheep, kid, fish, and poultry of various kinds, with excellent wines and fruits, cost a mere trifle. For a few hundreds a-year a stranger might live *en prince*, in this delicious island,—have his chateau amidst gardens in a retired and beautiful situation, his Arab horses, a number of servants, a climate that will probably add ten years to his life, if he will consent to live without the enervating pleasures

of high society. It is well known that an English gentleman of handsome fortune made Scio his abode for many years: he had his family with him, lived in a charming spot, and kept a yacht, in which he often visited the other Greek islands, but always returned to his own abode with undiminished pleasure, and resolved never to forsake it. He died about four years ago, before the breaking out of the Revolution.

LETTER XXIV.

In the middle of the isle of Rhodes, is a very lofty mountain: from its steepness, it can only be ascended on foot, and this occupies several hours. A small Greek chapel stands near the summit, to which the people often make pilgrimages. From the top of this mountain the prospect is very fine and extensive, including the whole of Rhodes, which lies like a map at your feet, the coast of Caramania, and a number of the isles of the Archipelago. The summit and parts of the sides of this noble mountain are covered with trees; but the hills and valleys are, in general, bare of wood; the pine forests, which formerly shaded many parts of the island, have been in part cut down by the Turks, for various purposes.

One morning, I rose very early, before the old priest was stirring; and passing through

the streets, took my way towards a lofty hill to the north of the town. The weather was splendid, and the coolness of the air delightful; the sky, the earth, and sea, being all covered with the richest hues of morning. A deep silence reigned throughout; no noise of carriage or horse, no song of the milk-maid, or hum of men. Nature, in Oriental scenes, is generally undisturbed, and a poet of the lakes might here revel in the most lonely and hushed communion with woods, waters, and precipices. The path along the summit of the hill was narrow, overgrown with foliage, and sprinkled with various-coloured wild-flowers; and the scenery below was rocky and bold down to the water's edge; but the path conducted from the summit down the opposite side of the hill fronting the bay, and wound amidst various country seats, each placed amidst gardens, in the shade of which fountains played. Some of these abodes were irresistibly tempting: they rose on the declivities above each other, amidst rocks and groves of fruit-trees, and from their elevated site, looked down on the most lovely scenery. The grapes hung in clusters from the trees, and the oranges were fully ripe. The air had become rather sultry as

the day advanced, and I came with no small pleasure to a fine fountain of water, built by the Turks for the use of passengers; it was a neat stone structure, and a bason was suspended by a chain, to drink out of. The way, at last, led out of the woods and gardens to the sea-shore, and, after some time, entered the town at the western gate.

The island was at this time in a state of tranquillity; the horrors of the Revolution had not extended to it, and the Turks were too strong and numerous for the Greeks to make any attempt for their freedom. Our stay here was of the utmost service to us; it quite broke the miseries of the voyage, and enabled us at last, though unwillingly, to commit ourselves to our bark and its ignorant captain. The privations which many of the passengers had suffered, were, however, at an end; some fresh provisions, and a whole sheep, had been sent on board for their use.

We again set sail, on a very fine day, and with the wind somewhat in our favour; but this soon died away, and on the following evening we were embayed among the rocks and small isles at the back of the island. The sea was quite calm and unruffled, the sun had set with its accustomed beauty, and not a

breath of air filled our sails. We rested immoveable in a small lake, around which was an amphitheatre of hills and rocks, precipitous, or covered with verdure, and of various forms. At the foot of one lofty and shelving cliff stood a small fishing-village, at the edge of the water; it contained only a few habitations, but looked so neat, lonely, and tranquil, that we could not help contrasting it with the ruined dwellings and persecuted outcasts we had so frequently met with. A faint breeze at last sprang up, and slowly wafted us through this chain of precipices and islets.

For ten days more was this unfortunate voyage prolonged; till, at length, we arrived in sight of the Morea, and soon after came within a few miles of Navarino. The Albanian, in his handsomest dress, and gold embossed pistols at his sash, accompanied us on shore.

We were received by the Greeks, on landing, with great civility, and were conducted to the house of the governor, who was a German. From him we obtained a passport, as we were about to proceed into the interior. Michel then sought out a comfortable lodging, and procured one not far from the sea, with a

small garden in front, and an open corridor above, that commanded a very extensive view of the beautiful harbour, the castle of Sphacteria, and the mountains on the right.

This abode was not wholly our own; three unfortunate Frenchmen and a German had previously occupied part of it. One of the former, Prospère, was a handsome young man; had been an officer in Buonaparte's army, and served in some of the last campaigns; but afterwards having nothing to do and not much to live on, and incited by the desire of fighting for the cause of Greece, he had left Paris, much against the will of his mother, whose only child he was, and embarked with his companions at Marseilles. He knew nothing previously of the real state of things in Greece; had formed romantic idëas of the glory to be gained there, and doubted not of being well maintained, and of having his services appreciated;—but he had not been many days in the country ere he found himself fatally deceived. He was a good artillery officer, and the senate, then residing at Argos, gave him the command of the fortifications of Navarino, which was surrounded by a wall, and mounted with about a dozen pieces of cannon.

His three companions, who had been non-

commissioned officers in the French army, and about a hundred Greeks, were all the force for the defence of the place; but, from its situation, it was very little exposed to attack. One night, however, a part of the Turkish garrison of Modon, a very pretty and well-fortified town at a little distance, thought to surprise Navarino, knowing it to be but weakly defended: they landed in the dead of night, and Prospère and his companions were roused by the accidental report of a musket. The Turks, assembled on the beach just below the town, were on the point of marching up, when the Frenchmen with difficulty prevailed on five or six of the Greeks to assist them in firing two or three cannon; for most of the others, who assembled confusedly when they found the Turks had landed, and were close at hand, ran away in affright.... Two or three cannon were fired, and, though the balls, from the darkness and confusion, never probably went near the enemy, they had the desired effect of frightening the Turks; who, contrary to their expectation, believing the garrison to be on the alert, embarked with precipitation, and returned to Modon.

The Senate allowed these unfortunate Frenchmen rations of wine, meat, and bread,

every day, and a house to live in, but their bounty extended no farther. Their clothes were in a sad plight; in shoes and stockings they were nearly bankrupts, and could not obtain a farthing of pay to relieve their necessities. Prospère, shortly before my arrival, went to Argos, to endeavour to obtain better terms from the Senate: he was received with great civility; they acknowledged that he had preserved Navarino to them; "but we cannot afford you any pay, Monsieur," they said; "our own officers serve without any; we have no money; let us wait for better times; go back and defend Navarino, and when we have reconquered our country, your services shall be well rewarded." Hope was indeed the only consolation these adventurers had; they had not even the solace, so dear to a soldier, of good wine. Throughout the Morea the wine at this time was execrable, in consequence of the confusion and the neglect of the vintage, which the war had occasioned. The only sort in general to be met with was of the colour of gin; and a plant that had been steeped in it, of whose flavour the Greeks are fond, had given it so horrible a flavour, that the fear of being poisoned deterred us, after the first trial, from ever touching it again.

Michel bought a sheep, and, having dressed some part of it, we made a pleasant repast together, and finished the remains of the Cyprus wine left from our voyage, and which put the exiled officer into excellent spirits. The remainder of the mutton served them subsequently with some good dinners, for they were not seldom badly supplied with meat; and a loan of a few dollars enabled poor Prospère to re-furnish himself with shoes and stockings.

Navarino had been besieged nine months by the Greeks, and, during the whole of this time, no succours had been sent by the Porte. It is surrounded by a pretty strong wall, and stands on a gentle declivity, sloping into the sea. It was never very strenuously pressed, yet the Turks defended it with spirit, till their provisions were entirely consumed. They had hoped for relief to the last, and for several days had been compelled to drink sea-water. A deep pit is now to be seen near the foot of the wall, within which this unfortunate garrison had hoped to find some fresh water: they had dug at last into the solid rock, before they gave up the attempt. Reduced to utter extremity, they still made a kind of capitulation, which was very indifferently observed by the Greeks. A great many were put to the sword

on the spot: the governor, who had retreated to his house, shared the same fate, with all his family; and the mansion, which was a very spacious one, was completely sacked, and at the time we visited it, was ruinous and empty. This chief begged hard for his life, but it would not avail. The next evening, the Greeks led several hundreds of the women and children to the sea-shore, below the town, and put them all to the sword, so that the waves were dyed with their blood. This account we had from the Greeks themselves; and Prospère, who landed soon after, said, this was a most piteous and cruel scene—mothers embracing their children, and young women imploring mercy—but all were speedily put out of their misery. Still more merciless than this was the conveying five hundred of the Turks to a small island, about two miles from the shore, quite desolate and uninhabited, and from which it was impossible to escape: they were all starved to death on this isle, and their bones are still to be seen there. Happily for the cause of Greece, atrocities like these have been long since laid aside; and, in the commencement of the struggle for liberty, much allowance is to be made for men, on whose minds the remembrance of the oppressions they had endured so long was still recent.

Several of the Mainotes were to be seen in the streets. It was the first time we had met with these lawless but brave people. They were dressed in the rude fashion of their country, which had some resemblance to the Highland costume; and they looked prepared for any mischief.

The neighbourhood of Navarino, or Neo Castro, as it is now called, is very romantic and pleasing; hills, isolated and sharp, rise just behind the town. The harbour of Navarino is one of the most secure in the world; the entrance is not wide, and you may sail a long way between the shore and the small isles and rocks which confine the port. Several of these rocks are arched, and have a singular appearance, the waves having a wide and open passage through.

The Isle of Sphacteria is about three miles from the town; it is small and rocky, and the spots so obstinately defended by the Spartans, and the tombs of those who were slain there, are still pointed out. The ignorance of the Greeks in general, however, respecting these parts of their country, which were illustrious of old, is very great. On asking some respectable Greeks of Tripolizza what the plain of Mantinea, about three hours distant, was famous for, they appeared to have no knowledge of the

subject; one, however, observed that a great battle had been fought there. An Italian had settled here, and kept a liqueur-shop, in which he did not seem to have much custom. It was not entirely, however, destitute of every kind of luxury; there was a coffee-house, in which Greeks, Mainotes, Italians, and French mixed together, and behind was a very pretty garden, well provided with trees; benches and tables were laid beneath, where these people assembled together during the heat of the day, and talked over the war and their exploits. The women of the town were rather ill-looking; the close dress they are accustomed to wear injures the appearance of their figure.

A considerable part of the town had been injured at the time of its capture by the Greeks; houses were to be seen shattered, or in ruins, on every side; the best dwellings had all more or less suffered, and the one which we obtained for a residence was in some parts in a very infirm state.

The Frenchmen expected shortly to leave the town, having received orders to march to Tripolizza, and join the troops assembling there. Prospère possessed a tattered volume of Racine, in which was the play of Britannicus,

and he set a peculiar value on it. I borrowed it of him, and hinted that I should be very happy if he would part with or exchange it; his reply showed a trait of feeling truly French, and in unison with that displayed by many of his countrymen who fell at Waterloo, and on whose bodies a volume of poetry, songs, or even of mathematics were often found: "I would part with it to you, my dear friend," he said, "with delight; but it is my only consolation. Whenever I read Britannicus, which is very often, the love of glory, and the admiration of patience amidst sufferings, live again in my heart; though I can assure you this cursed war had nearly crushed all my military virtues. If I part with Racine, I shall have no comfort left!"

We now resolved to leave Navarino, and proceed into the interior. Having procured horses and a guide, on the following forenoon we passed out of the gate, and bent our way along the cliffs; having the attractive prospect of the bay on our left. The way soon became woody, and varied with high and pointed hills on the right. The weather was not oppressively hot; and delicious springs, which, gushing in rivulets, or dug into the earth, abound in Greece for want of rivers, fre-

quently crossed our path, and tempted us to stop and quench our thirst.

In the course of a few hours we came to a small cluster of cottages, and rested awhile beneath the shade of the trees, while the villagers brought us some milk, which proved a most grateful refreshment.

After advancing again some time, we entered a long and thick wood, and soon perceived, at a short distance in front, a large body of people pursuing the same path. They went on very slowly, and on joining them, we found they were a party of unfortunate Sciots, who had with difficulty escaped from the Island after the massacre; and were now seeking a place of refuge and a home in Greece. It was a scene that would have touched the hardest heart; the women were some of them dreadfully ill, reduced by famine and suffering, yet carrying their infants in their arms; the men were all on foot; the few surviving branches of families, strangers, orphans, and widows, were all blended together in one common bond of misery.—We gave up our horses for the relief of some of the young and delicate girls of the party.

Passing out of the wood, we proceeded down a long and gentle declivity into a fine

plain. The scene was magnificent: mountains rose around covered with groves nearly to their summits, and the sea opened a few miles in our front, in the bay of Calamata: but these children of sorrow were alive only to their own destitute condition; with their eyes fixed on the ground, they gave vent only to bitter complainings. At the foot of the hill we halted, beneath the shade of a large spreading tree; with difficulty the women, who were ill, were lifted off the horses, and seated on the grass.

Most of them had been of a very respectable condition in society, but, flying from Scio amidst the massacre of their relatives and friends, had left all behind them. One, a fine young woman, was supported against a tree, her countenance was pallid, and her eyes sunken, and her fortitude had wholly forsaken her; she seemed resolved to receive no consolation. A tedious voyage, want of food, the fatigue of travelling, her lover murdered,—all might well conspire to overwhelm her. Being better provided with refreshments, we were happy to administer some relief to them: a fountain gushed out in the shade of a rock near by; and, having rested some time, we again proceeded. The path wound amidst

rocks and narrow vallies, affording a variety of pleasant scenes. Our course was very slow on account of our unfortunate companions: they were going to Calamata, where some of them had friends:—but what a change from the lovely and luxurious Scio, its handsome dwellings embosomed in gardens, and elegantly furnished,—to the outcast dependant life which must, in future, be their only lot!

A lofty yet barren mountain excited our admiration; on a projecting point of which, about half way down, was seated a spacious monastery. The situation was magnificent. Our path was often incumbered with the luxuriance of the foliage: that tall and beautiful flower, the daphné, grew wild in profusion. Nothing indeed could exceed the richness of the soil every where; yet very little cultivation was visible. What a glorious country would Greece make, were she in the hands of an industrious, enlightened people!

It was after sunset when we entered a large village, where we intended to stay for the night. Our companions went to some of the dwellings, trusting either to the hospitality of the people, or to former acquaintance: we never heard any more of them: as Calamata was only a few hours distance, they no doubt arrived there on the following day.

We proceeded to inquire for the magistrate of the village, and found his worship in a narrow street, seated at the door of a coffee-house, surrounded by several neighbours, and enjoying himself much to his satisfaction. On presenting my passport from Navarino, he looked it carefully over, and then invited me to take coffee with him. It was a calm and warm evening, and the last sunset hues were lingering on the village and its romantic environs. A group soon formed around us, and became very inquisitive to know if we brought any news, or had heard any thing of the events of the war. They had not the smallest doubt of the success of their armies, and of glorious victories, of some of which they told marvellous tales. We had not long since come from Turkey, and they had many questions to ask respecting the late events there; they complained much of the conduct of some of the English vessels, which had assisted their enemies by carrying corn to them when reduced to extremity.

The French had obtained, at this time, the highest popularity, from the humanity of some of their merchants and consuls to this unfortunate people. The French consul at Smyrna, had saved the lives of some hundreds of wretched Greeks, whom the Turks were about

to butcher: the active and intrepid humanity of this gentleman, on many occasions, was admirable. He had resolutely interposed between the murderers and the victims, and had either protected them whilst there, or procured them a passage to the Morea, or some of the Italian ports.

This worthy Greek magistrate had sent a messenger to look out a lodging for me, which was soon effected; and having finished our coffee and conversation, we took our leave of him. After rambling through one or two narrow streets, we came to our abode for the night, which stood in the midst of a large court; a long flight of steps, but so ruinous and narrow, that, being nearly dark, it required some caution to ascend them, led to an open corridor, which, according to the general construction of the Greek house, afforded shade and prospect at the same time: here the inhabitants love to sit for many hours of the day. On entering the mansion, we found it consisted of two rooms, adjoining each other; the one contained only a large heap of flax in a corner, and the other, an old woman, who was watching a fire on which her supper-pot was boiling. She was so intent on her employment, that she was not aware of our

entrance, till Michel demanded if she could give us any thing for supper. A chilling negative was the only reply; and we were fain to adjourn to the next apartment, and send out for some wine, which proved execrably bad: the poor Sciot refugees could scarcely be worse accommodated. The moon rose splendidly, however, and shone through the shattered windows of the poor woman's mansion; and by her light we laid ourselves down on the heap of flax to sleep. But it was unfortunately inhabited by myriads of insects, and it was impossible for one moment to close an eye; we were bitten nearly to death, and rising while the moon yet shone clearly, hurried our guides to proceed, and left the town with great good will.

We went on for a couple of hours, overcome with sleep and fatigue, till the warmth of the sun cheered our spirits; the path was now amidst steep and rocky hills, but no signs of either village or cottage; indeed the whole tract seemed nearly uninhabited. Passing out from among the hills into a more open country, we came to a beautiful village on the summit of a rising ground. It would have tempted any one to stop and linger a few hours there, and we hailed it with delight. But

what was our disappointment at finding it totally uninhabited with the exception of one house, at the door of which a woman stood, who informed us it was impossible to procure the least refreshment there. It had been a Turkish village,—but its inhabitants, men, women, and children, had all been slain by the Greeks; and this wanton cruelty had desolated one of the sweetest spots we ever met with in Greece. It was embosomed in trees and gardens, had an uncommonly clean appearance, and a small and delicious stream of water ran through it. The white minaret of the lonely mosque was there, but the muezzin's voice was hushed; the garden-shades, where the Moslem assembled each day to smoke and recline, were all deserted; and the fountains beside them gushed uselessly away. Yet the houses were entire, as when their possessors were murdered, but all empty and silent; and it stood amidst its woods on that rising ground, overlooking the plain below, a spectacle of beauty and of mourning: for each dwelling, no doubt had contained its family, who, but a short time before, lived happy amidst the groves which now spread over their tombs! Its solitary inhabitant was a Greek woman, who had come here perhaps, because a good habitation might be so cheaply

obtained. We left it with deep regret, execrating the barbarous manner of conducting this war, which so often doomed the innocent to perish with the guilty.

The aspect of the country soon became wilder, and the mountains rose loftier on each side; we wished to find our way to Messené, but the guide appeared to be ignorant of it. The day was now oppressively hot; and we had travelled six hours, after a wretched night's lodging, and without breakfast, turning sometimes to one path, and then to another, but not coming in view of the object we sought. At last we succeeded in entering one of the long and rich valleys of Messené, bounded by high and noble mountains on each side: the Greeks were gathering in their harvest, for the valley had been sown thick with corn. It was bounded at the upper end by a high mountain, on the steep side of which, overhanging the valley, and in a bold and rugged situation, stood a spacious monastery.

At the foot of the mountain was a small Greek village; we made up to it, and ascending a flight of steps that conducted to one of the houses, met with a ready reception. We took possession of the apartment into which the

flight of steps ushered us; it was small, with two windows, which overlooked the whole of the beautiful valley beneath, and the sea beyond. Excessively fatigued, I had no sooner taken some coffee, than making the floor my bed, I fell fast asleep, and did not awake, till the sultry heats of the day were over. It was then delightful to walk out, at the foot of the mountain; the convent stood on a fearful steep overhead, where the monks' passion for loneliness was gratified to the full; no habitation sharing with them their lofty seat. Yet the prospect they possessed was glorious, with an air as pure as earth could furnish. About two hundred yards from the village, at the precipice's foot, was a fine fountain, that appeared to gush out of the rock, and was so thickly overhung by a mass of trees, that no ray of the sun could fall on it,—here the young women came almost every hour for water: a few of them were well made, with agreeable features, dark eyes, and a complexion not particularly fair; but their costume, their light step, and long tresses falling down behind, gave them a very Grecian appearance. This valley, covered with corn and pasture, studded with a few cottages, and opening so finely to the sea, was near the scite of the celebrated city of

Messené. Several heaps of ruins were scattered about it, but of no great magnitude. The cool air of evening was most acceptable to our feelings. The Grecian climate is very fine, and less sultry than those of the East, with nights almost equally pure, sunsets as magnificent, and equally free from rain. But, in general it cannot be called a very healthy climate, being in many parts extremely subject to fevers.

Returning to the Grecian cottage, the good people had prepared a very comfortable repast: we sat down beside the windows that looked over the valley and its mountain barriers; and felt that glow of spirits which the vicissitudes of travelling, from hardship to comfort, and barrenness to beauty, so often give.

LETTER XXV.

THIS village, situated at the foot of Mount Ithomé, consists of but few cottages. Besides the beauty of its situation, the climate must be very fine; being shut out from all cold and sharp winds from the surrounding mountains, yet open to the sea at some distance in front. The monastery, on the summit of the mountain, is a very large building; too extensive, as is often the case, for the monks, who are, however, very comfortably situated, and have poultry in abundance, as well as mutton, and other good things. On and about this mountain are the ruins which yet mark the power and skill of the ancient Messenians: massive walls, inclosing a spacious area, in which are remains of two gates, of considerable size and magnificence. Large fragments and piles of stones are found in various parts around these; and the rich verdure that partially shrouds them,

gives some of them a picturesque appearance. The ruins of a theatre, possessed, however, of little beauty, are the most entire among them. It was not safe at present to remain long in this neighbourhood, as many of the Mainotes were wandering about; and, owing to the disorders of the country, it was vain to think of visiting Laconia.

We left the neighbourhood of Messené in the evening, and, turning to the right, passed up a narrow defile overhung with trees, among which were the ruins of a church. It became wider after a time, and opened on a long and gentle descent down the mountain side. This was covered with wood nearly to the foot; and we entered on a verdant and beautiful plain, inclosed by a noble amphitheatre of mountains. Not a single village or habitation was to be seen in its whole extent, yet the soil appeared extremely rich, and presented every advantage for tillage and habitation.

The daylight had left us, and we were wandering on the plain in the middle of a thick wood; for the guide had lost his way. We had lost all hope of finding any lodging better than the bare earth beneath the trees; and, in the present disordered state of the country, this was not a very safe alternative: it was

quite dark, and the wood was so thick that it was difficult to discover any path, when we suddenly heard the voice of a woman. My servant called out in the Sclavonian language, and was answered in the same. Advancing, we discovered a cottage, inhabited by an Albanian and his family, who gave us a friendly welcome. The cottage consisted of one long and low apartment, which a fire, blazing in the middle, filled with smoke; amidst which, dimly seen, were the wife and children of the owner. Its appearance altogether was so dirty, that we declined the shelter of the roof, and preferred reposing on the ground without.

An excellent fire was kindled, and a crust of bread, with a little tea, formed our frugal supper. A few other peasants arrived and formed a circle round the fire, and sat chatting till a late hour. These men had been at the storming of Tripolizza, and spoke of it with exultation, wishing that such an affair might soon occur again, as they longed for more plunder. "My host, amidst the general massacre and capture, had secured a young Turkish woman, and brought her to his home Her fate was very hard; her husband had been slain in the storm, and she was no better than a slave in the house of her captor, and was treat-

ed with neglect and indignity: she was rather good-looking; but her dejected and pale features showed that her misfortunes weighed heavily on her heart. This man had the baseness to offer to sell her to my servant for five piastres, but the latter had feeling enough to reject it with indignation.

These people, like all the rest of the Greeks, held the Mainotes in fear; as much for their lawless and plundering habits, which they exercised on friends and foes, as for their bravery. "As several of them," the Albanians said, "were now in the neighbourhood, and generally made free to take what they pleased," we were obliged to sleep almost with our arms in our hands. The night was very calm; and the moon, rising from behind the high mountains, close on the left, shone beautifully on the forest, and the cottage of the Albanian; and, lying down, in its light, on my coarse bed, in the open air, I soon fell fast asleep.

Next morning we crossed the plain, and again ascended the mountains. The path, by degrees, lost its rich verdure, and became barren and craggy; but on descending, in a couple of hours, into another plain, the scenery was once more rich and varied. The only defect in the Grecian scenery is the want of

water; you seldom meet with a river, and for this reason, wells of cool and delicious water, dug deep in the earth, are to be met with frequently. The Eurotas is completely dried up, and the Kissus nearly so; and you often pass over long tracts without finding the smallest stream.

About mid-day we halted beneath a tree on the summit of a mountain, and the country all around had a delightful and romantic appearance. The view extended over some of the plains and mountains of Arcadia. The hills were, in general, covered to the summit, with verdure that afforded pasture for numerous flocks; but the habitations were very few.

A little before sunset we rested for an hour by a fountain; a Greek joined us from Tripolizza, to which city we were going. He brought us the news of a cruel event that he had seen perpetrated there a few hours before; the massacre, in the streets, of twenty Turkish women, many of them of respectable condition. It was the deed of the soldiery, unauthorised by the officers, and was perfectly wanton and unprovoked. The shrieks and lamentations of these unfortunate women were enough to have moved any heart. Michel,

a Greek in his descent, had hitherto, warmed by his love of the cause, resolved to join their ranks, and fight for their liberty, but changed his sentiments from that moment. He cursed the Greeks bitterly for their cold-blooded cruelty, and declared that Heaven would never prosper a cause disgraced by such deeds.

The way now led over a long and rugged mountain, where we could proceed but slowly, and then descended into a wide and flat plain. The light was rapidly leaving us, when we fell in with some Mainotes, who had straggled from Colocotroni's army. This chief had suddenly raised the siege of Patras, without the consent of the Senate; and his army had dispersed in various directions, while he was supposed to be marching on Tripolizza with a small body who adhered to him. These Mainotes urged us with great earnestness to spend the night with them at a small village on the plain, to which they pointed, and where, they said, they would kill a lamb for our supper. A body of sixty more of their comrades were about an hour's distance behind. We had previously intended stopping at this village, as it would be very late ere we could reach Tripolizza; but their earnest invitation decided the matter. Among them and their

fellows every thing we had would have quickly been taken, and perhaps our lives too. They were enraged at our refusal; but, as we were on horseback, and they on foot, we passed rapidly on, and soon got at a good distance.

It was now quite dark; the moon being hid, the path became difficult and tedious; and we were not a little rejoiced when we found ourselves close to the walls and towers of the town ere we perceived them. We knocked long and loud, and were answered from within by a shrill female voice, from an adjoining house, that no admission could be had. The guard at last came, but he absolutely refused to give us entrance at that time of the night. We waited at the gate for an hour, and had nearly given up all hope of an asylum for the night, when a well-dressed Greek, whom we had overtaken and passed in the course of the day, came up, and obtained admission for himself and us.

It being far advanced in the night, we demanded of the guard if he could not give us a lodging till morning? The soldier willingly consented, and led the way through several narrow streets into a small court, where a flight of steps conducted us to his dwelling. We were ushered into a neat inner apartment,

the floor of which was covered with a carpet and cushions. A small lamp was placed in the middle, and a low table, spread with a cloth, was placed before me by the soldier's daughter, who soon after brought the materials for my supper. She was a fine Grecian girl, tall and well-made, and her jet-black hair hung down her back in long and graceful tresses. The tone of her voice was very sweet, and she did the honours of the house with the utmost agility and good-will. The supper was a frugal one; but the transition from the dark and dangerous path we had passed, to the comfort of the Greek cottage, the lamp, the soft cushions, and the bright and kindly looks of the fair attendant, would have made a draught of water taste like the wine of Shiras. Several soldiers, friends of the host, soon after entered the apartment, and sat down with him and Michel to supper. They had taken part in the massacre of the unfortunate Turkish women this day; and their conversation turned wholly on this subject. They talked of it with the utmost coolness. After their departure, making the carpet and cushion serve as my bed, fatigue made me soon enjoy a sweet repose.

The next morning we went to the office of

the police, and presenting my passport from Navarino, I requested them to provide me with a good lodging; Nicolai, one of their body, rose up, and said he would conduct me to his house, where I should be well accommodated. Nicolai was a gentlemanly man, of an effeminate appearance; and before the Revolution was in good circumstances, but was now reduced almost to poverty. He had still three good houses left, but they were useless, as no one inhabited them. The flight of many of the Greeks at the commencement of the war, and the slaughter of the Turks at the capture of the town, had quite thinned the population. The house to which he led me was tolerably spacious, with a garden, over which was a corridor, that looked on the mountains which bounded the plain. In a small part of this residence lived two sisters of Nicolai; the husband of one had been murdered at Constantinople, but of this the poor woman was kept entirely ignorant, and still expected his return. Nicolai had a brother, who was, like himself, too timid to go to war. Their father had held an office of some importance under the Turkish Government in the town, and during the siege had been useful to many of his unfortunate countrymen, and assisted them

to escape out of the town; and, during the storm, the old man vainly thought this would have given him a title to mercy; but he was slain among the rest, because he had held an employment under the Turks. His sons complained bitterly of the ingratitude of their countrymen in not sparing their father, all whose property also they had seized.

Tripolizza is situated in the middle of a large plain, the greater part of which is uncultivated: the mountains form an amphitheatre around it. The scene is altogether of an uninteresting character; but the climate is pure and healthy. The town is large and ill-built; and contained, a few months before, a large population; but this was now reduced to one-third. From its having few trees or gardens, it possesses little of an Oriental appearance. It is surrounded by a wall, about ten or twelve feet high, so much the reverse of formidable, that, when we first walked round it, we could not help laughing at the idea of its having employed an army of thirty thousand Greeks for some months to take it. One or two wells, sunk deep without the walls, form the chief supplies of water for the lower order of the inhabitants. The devastations occasioned by the capture of the place were visible on every

side; the finest palaces either wholly or partially in ruins. Like the Scotch reformers of Knox's days, the Greeks, in the impulse of the moment, appear to have thought only of destruction.

Near the western gate was a spacious and elegant palace of a Turk of high rank. Being very wealthy, he had adorned this house at great expense; the apartments were richly gilded and painted, and overlooked the whole plain and mountains beyond. He was a man, as his enemies allowed, of a mild and amiable character, and very generous. During the storm, he retired with his wife and his numerous children to an inner apartment, into which the captors soon burst their way, and all were slain. One son only was spared, and this unfortunate boy wandered about the streets without a home or a friend. He came one day to my apartment, and sat down very dejectedly: he had just been, he said, to the Senate to endeavour to get some pittance allowed him, but in vain. The palace of his father was turned into a kind of barracks:—I frequently went there; the prospect from its windows is fine; but the rich apartments were filled by the lowest Greek soldiers, gaming, drinking, and destroying. In a small re-

tired apartment were one day seated some renegade Greeks, who had changed their religion out of fear, and had been spared by their countrymen: they had with them two or three children of some of the Turkish lords, whom they appeared to treat with great kindness; and this was an excellent trait in their behaviour; they had been the dependants of those families in their prosperity. One boy, whose noble descent was visible in every feature, and who still wore his turban and pink robe, was the son of one of the chief commanders.

Almost every day, in my walks without the walls, I passed by a heap of unburied bones of Turks, many of whom must have fallen in that spot. The town was not fairly taken, a circumstance that not a little aggravated the horrors attending its capture. After the siege had continued some months, and the garrison, which included a considerable part of its male population of all ranks, was reduced very low, a treaty was entered into for a capitulation; the Greek army, as agreed on, drew off to the mountains, and some stragglers only wandered near the walls, where the Turks were off their guard. Several peasants, who sold fruit, approached the rampart, and dis-

posed of it to the Turks, a few of whom came down and mixed with them; and some Greeks, who happened to be not far off, seeing the confusion and unguarded state of this part of the garrison and the town, climbed on the walls, attacked the Turks suddenly, and, uttering loud cries, called to the troops on the hills, who rushed down tumultuously. The Mainotes first stormed the northern gate, and opened a passage for the entrance of the rest. The slaughter in the streets was immense; men, women, and children, all perished! every other passion was quenched in the bosom of the Greeks, except the thirst for blood. Numbers of the most beautiful women in Tripolizza were conducted to the small ravine without the town, and sabred, without mercy. Between one and two thousand Albanian troops, who formed part of the garrison, were allowed to march out unmolested; and being conducted to the nearest port, were embarked. Atrocities such as these often marked the conduct of each side in the first period of the war. The Greeks, fortunately for their cause, have for some time adopted a more humane conduct, as in the capitulation of Napoli di Romania, where no violence was committed, and the garrison, together with the chief part

of the population, were safely embarked for their own country.

The house in which the senate assembled every day at Tripolizza, had been a large and handsome Turkish dwelling; they did not seem to take their office very laboriously; pipes were generally in their hands, and the table, around which they sat, was covered with newspapers.

Affairs at this time were in a critical and alarming state: it was said that Raschid Pacha was advancing rapidly with forty thousand men. On the way to the city, we had heard some rumours of this kind, but so confused and contradictory, that little confidence was to be placed in them; but now they were spoken with greater confidence, and filled the minds of the Greeks with dismay. Colocotroni also had broke up the army with which he was besieging Patras, and it was not known what step he would next take. With their usual thoughtlessness, however, the Greeks continued to saunter about the coffee-houses, or play a kind of chess game: a universal amusement, for they were seen every hour of the day engaged in it, seated in the open air. The costume of these soldiers was light and graceful; a thin vest, sash, and a

loose pantaloon, which fell just below the knee. The head was covered with a small and ugly cap, as the Turks never allowed them to wear a turban. They had most of them pistols and muskets, to which many added sabres or ataghans.

The mosques in the city exhibited a curious appearance: they were very numerous, but the Greeks had strove to turn them into churches. The minarets were deserted; the Muezzins, as well as the Imauns, having all been slain. The sentences from the Koran, in large gold letters on the walls within, were, with great industry, partially or wholly effaced; and where the Imaun's pulpit stood, small altars were erected, and lamps were burning. But it was impossible to efface the Islamite features of the buildings; they looked as if Mohammed and the saints had become friendly, and agreed to be worshipped under the same roof. Although divine service was often performed there, very few of the Greeks ever attended: indeed the effect of the Revolution thus far has certainly been to weaken the attachment of the Greeks to the religion of their country; and if it is protracted, it will, in progress of time, like the Revolution in France, perhaps first destroy the confidence and respect the people have been

accustomed to give to their priests, and next discover to them the folly of the superstitions and ceremonies of their faith.

In the coffee-houses in Tripolizza we every day met with priests, mingling with the common soldiers, and frequently drinking with them. These ecclesiastics were sometimes obliged, against their will, to march in the ranks; others served of their own accord, and their appearance, with a sabre at their side, pistols at their girdle, their priestly dress, and a long beard sweeping their breast, was sufficiently grotesque. Two or three of those poor pastors deplore the necessity that takes them from their peaceful avocations, and places them in the rank with the rudest of the populace, who soon lose all reverence for them. Indeed the growing disrelish of the people for the services of their church, is pretty evident, in their frequent desertion and neglect of them. The religion of Islam, also, since its foundation, had never received so complete a downfal as here. Could the Prophet walk the earth again, and behold the utter ignominy and scorn cast on his name, his own houri-bowers would fail to console him afterwards. The very children in the streets spit on the earth at the sound of his name, and laugh at and execrate it in every possible way.

All the copies of the Koran that could be found, some of which were very elegant, were either burned or dispersed. An Imaun, the only one who was left alive in the city, and who was spared by the Greeks on account of the excellence and amiableness of his character, often came to visit me. His two sons had been slain. He had little left to live on, but drank his gratuitous wine with infinite relish, a luxury that seldom came in his way. He was extremely communicative, and bore his misfortunes with equanimity; complaining sometimes, however, that in his old age he was left desolate, and that his two sons had been murdered almost before his eyes! This horrible circumstance, whenever he permitted himself to dwell upon it, seemed to convulse him with agony. He was a tall and mild-looking man, and, like most other Turks we had conversed with, not intolerant in his opinions; believing that people who professed other faiths would go to Heaven, as well as the followers of the Prophet; though the latter would be favoured with the best place there,—a sentiment that could never be wrung from a Catholic, and seldom from a Greek, compared to whose bigotry that of the Mussulman is faint indeed. The Imaun, in the spoliation of his mosque, had saved a very

handsome copy of the Koran, which he sold me. On asking him, if it was true that the Koran maintained that women did not go to paradise, he protested there was no such passage, and that no Turk held such a sentiment. Their belief, he said, was, that the women would not dwell in the same seats of bliss with the men, but that a separate paradise was provided for them, where they were all to live together.

It was very fortunate for us that we were lodged in Nicolai's house, as he was one of the police. His dwelling was respected, while a number of others were entered, and plundered by the Mainotes, many of whom were in the town. These lawless fellows had belonged to the army besieging Patras, and cared not on what they laid their hands. A young French surgeon from Marseilles at this time resided in the city, and had obtained considerable practice, though he was very badly paid for it. Being the only man of his profession who possessed any skill in the place, he was much regarded both by the Senate and people; and numbers of the wounded, who were brought in at times from distant skirmishes, were indebted to his care. His house, however, was broken into by the Mainotes, and plundered of many articles. He went and complained

to the Senate the next day, which expressed itself very angry at the outrage, but confessed that it had no power at that moment to prevent the disorders of the Mainotes. Many of these were uncommonly fine-looking men, and were the flower of the Grecian troops: they had been accustomed from childhood to habits of rapine, but paid implicit obedience to their chiefs; and on their native hills of Laconia, their manner of life, as well as government, bore a close resemblance to those of the Highlands of Scotland as they were a century ago. Like the Suliots, brave and desperate, and fondly attached to their native mountains, which they would defend to the last gasp,—both are infinitely superior to the faithless and fickle Albanians, men who would at all times change their religion and their master for higher pay.

Walking through the streets, I met one day with an Italian adventurer, who had been engaged in the siege of the town, and had the direction of two light pieces of artillery,—all the Greeks were possessed of. These, in the storming, were brought into the streets, and were of singular use in demolishing some of the finest buildings. This scoundrel, without the smallest feeling of regret, pointed out to me the remains of a large palace, the walls of

which were miserably shattered. The Greeks were unable to enter this mansion, as it was well defended; when he brought his two pieces of artillery into the narrow street that led to it, and at one discharge blew open the then Turkish wall; the breach was instantly entered by the soldiers, who put all within to the sword. The Italian exulted in this exploit, and some others of a similar kind. He invited me earnestly to enter his house, to pass an hour or two, and I consented. He played uncommonly well on several instruments, but, like many of his nation, was a thorough villain and sensualist. He had a complete harem in his house, and in one apartment had eight or ten Turkish and Grecian women, chiefly the former. These unfortunate beings were perfectly friendless and poor: some of them probably had been respectable; but in danger of their lives, and turned out of their homes, they had been glad to find a roof and a maintenance on any terms. The Italian talked of them and their misfortunes with perfect coolness: he had no money himself, but received rations for each of them every day from the Government; and thus they were supported. It was a matter of perfect indifference to this fellow which side he espoused, the Greeks or the Turks, so long as

he could live as he wished. Several other adventurers, of a similar stamp, were in the town.

The coffee-houses were generally full, great part of the day, with soldiers and citizens; the former from different parts of the Morea. In a narrow street, where an awning was suspended over a bench before the door, was a shop where very good coffee was to be had; and here we took our seat every day. It was often amusing to hear the boasting of many of the people, of their prowess and victories, and those they were yet to gain. A priest sometimes came and seated himself on the bench;—even the war did not make the good fathers forget their avocation, for they were absurdly building a new church at this time in the town, when the money might have been much better applied to the war. A Mainote would come, take his pipe, and look wildly round him, or sing one of his mountain songs. A very handsome young Greek, who had been a merchant, but was now a soldier, was pointed out to me as having met with adventures, and passed through scenes of peril and of love very like some of those in the life of Anastasius. Unquestionably that work is drawn more from real life, than romance; for what creature is

capable of sustaining so many characters, braving, dissembling, and finally extricating himself out of every difficulty so well as a subtle, clever, and elegant Greek?

Many of the unfortunate Sciots had found their way to Tripolizza, men and women of various ranks. It was easy to discover that the light step, laughing yet seducing eye, and animated features, did not belong to the women of the north of the Morea. Several of these Sciots, still possessing enough of these characters to mark their native home, but faded from what they were in their own isle, were to be seen at times wandering through the streets. Many of them, of both sexes, had taken up their abode in a good-sized house, and earned a scanty living by selling cakes and sweetmeats. The finest women in Greece are probably the Albanians, or the Suliotes; but those of the Morea are inferior in personal attractions to the inhabitants of the isles: the Athenian women are in general considered to be plain.

LETTER XXVI.

THE scenes of distress presented in some parts of Tripolizza were of the most affecting kind. Several Turkish families were fortunate enough to escape the general massacre at the storming, by secreting themselves, or were spared by the mercy of the captors. Some of these had been among the first and most opulent families in the city. Fortunate were the few who, amidst the general wreck, had saved a little money; however small the sum, it was now of inestimable use; but others had fallen into the greatest poverty, and scarcely enjoyed the necessaries of life.

Reduced more by misery than poverty, was the family of an Aga, consisting of the mother and five children. This lady was an amiable and agreeable woman, of middle age: her eldest daughter was about sixteen; Constantine, the son, was rather younger; and three children

completed the group. A fine young Turkish woman, about eighteen years of age, an intimate friend of the family, had resided with them through all their misfortunes, her own parents having been put to death. They lived perfectly retired, never daring to come into the street, and scarcely to quit the solitude of their apartments; and the place of their retreat was known but to few. The Aga was secreted in another part of the town, but his family knew only that he existed, being ignorant of the place of his retreat. I sometimes visited this unfortunate Turk: he had received five wounds at the capture of the place, and had languished ever since, neglected and destitute of every attention that his condition required. He was a noble-looking man, and displayed amidst his sufferings a great deal of dignity and fortitude. It was a pleasure to have it in my power to alleviate his unhappy condition, as well as that of his desolate family. He always inquired affectionately for his wife and children, whom he had not seen since their separation at the storming of the town, and manifested the greatest desire to see them once more; but this was impossible, and was a luxury he was doomed never to enjoy. The nights were now sometimes rather cold, and

he had only the floor for his couch, without any covering; a few months before he had lived in his palace, in the midst of affluence, and in the bosom of his family. The sight of them now, the voice of affection in his lonely chamber, would have been rich consolation to him; but he dragged on existence with little prospect, except of death. Wounded, unpitied, and in pain, he was even in this state plundered; for a useful addition to his clothing, that was sent him, was taken from him the next day by some unfeeling Greeks. Yet his look never lost its pride, nor was one murmur at his fate ever heard to proceed from his lips. He entreated me to use no efforts to make his son Constantine a Christian; a task, which I had neither industry nor skill to execute. This unfortunate youth had been secreted by his mother in an inner apartment, for fear some of the Greek soldiers should enter and put him to death, while they spared the women. She implored us to try to save him, by either taking him out of the country on our departure, or keeping him secluded in our own house. We promised, if it were possible, to do both, and, in the mean time, conveyed him to the dwelling of Nicolai; but in going through the streets we were exposed to

some danger; for several Mainotes encountered us, who, seeing the young Turk, grew enraged, and threatened to kill him, cursing the Englishman's interference on his behalf; but Michel, who never went out without being completely armed with his double-barrelled musket, sabre, and pistols, presented rather too formidable an aspect for an attack at that moment, and we lodged poor Constantine in an upper chamber in safety. Nicolai and his brother made violent remonstrances against it, saying that the Mainotes would certainly break into the house, when they knew of the Turk's being there, and we should all run the risk of being murdered; but, fortunately, these men never paid us a visit. This ill-fated youth often abandoned himself to grief, and wept every day over the misfortunes of his family.

There were many Europeans in Tripolizza who had come to fight for the Greeks: the greater part of them were needy adventurers, and were mostly French and Germans. A young Englishman had landed at Navarino a few days before, for the sole purpose of assisting to restore the liberties of Greece. His name was H——y, of a highly respectable family of Hull; but his enthusiasm outstripped

his prudence; he spoke no language but his own, and his finances, on account of his stay at Paris by the way, were very reduced. His arms were rich and expensive, his fusil and pistols being embossed with gold; and his courage was sufficient to cope with any perils. He was tall and handsome in his person, of a remarkably amiable disposition, and, during the short time he was in Greece, attracted the regard of all who met with him; but his constitution had never been accustomed to a sultry climate. After staying a few days in Tripolizza, he joined a detachment of Greeks who were ordered to march against a body of the enemy. It was in the month of July, the weather was excessively hot, and he was on foot, as were all the Greeks; but they are admirable walkers, and travel from morning till night with impunity, without complaining: the effects of which poor H—— soon felt dreadfully. He was accompanied by a young French gentleman, only eighteen years of age, embarked in the same chivalric cause. The Englishman's feet soon became so miserably blistered, that he could with difficulty keep up with the rest of the troops. On the second day the Turkish cavalry, detached from the army of Courschid Pacha, came in sight: the

Greeks no sooner perceived them advancing rapidly, than they began to fly to the mountains, which were not far off, calling on H—— and his companion to keep up with them. But this was not in the power of the former—the state of his feet rendered it impossible; and he gradually fell so far behind, that he was soon left alone with his unfortunate companion, who would not desert him. The Turks were now at hand, and attacked them; they fought for a few moments desperately, but were quickly cut down, side by side, and, after being plundered of their arms, were left unburied on the spot where they fell. A German who belonged to this detachment, and was an eye-witness of the whole, but who had found refuge with the rest in the mountains, gave me two or three days afterwards the account of this unfortunate affair.

But, among the sufferers at Tripolizza, no one was more interesting than a Turkish lady, of the name of Handivia Dudu. She was a widow, and only eighteen years of age: her husband, together with her parents, were put to death at the taking of the town. After his house had been entered and plundered by the Greeks, and he had been compelled to give up all his property to them, they promised to

spare his life, on condition that his wife would produce all her ornaments and jewels, which she had concealed. She sent them to the captors without a moment's hesitation, too happy to purchase her husband's life at such a price. When the Greeks found they had obtained every thing, they told the Turk to prepare to die. He knew them too well to doubt the execution of their purpose, and only requested he might be allowed to see his wife once more. "They suffered him," said Handivia, "to lay his head upon my bosom for a few minutes only; then they took him from my arms, and murdered him!" No violence was offered her, however, and she resided at this time with two Greek women, in a very good house, but retired from the street, all communication with which was carefully excluded. An air of settled melancholy had fixed itself on her fine countenance, and in relating the tale of her miseries she was much affected. "She never could love again," she said, "in this life; her husband, to whom she had been married only a few months, was her first and only love, and her happiness perished with him." Her situation was truly a desolate one: every friend she had on earth slain, encompassed by dangers, she was often the prey of

the liveliest alarms, and, not knowing in whom to confide, she was unable to stir from the house, for fear of insult or violence from the Greeks. "Often," said the ill-fated lady, "I wished for death, as my only refuge." Her eyes and hair were of the purest black; her stature rather below the middle size, and possessing the quality valued so highly by the Turks—an excess of *embonpoint*. Her complexion was exquisitely delicate, but colourless; and her hand and arm had a beauty that could not be surpassed. But Handivia, like most of her countrywomen, had few intellectual resources: she spoke Romaic as well as Turkish; but her mind had never been cultivated; and her fine, large Oriental eye was lighted up only by deep feeling, or impassioned recollections. Seated on the sopha, her dark ringlets falling on the soft swell of her bosom, with an elegant chibouque in her hand, or engaged in embroidery, which she worked with exquisite taste, the Turkish beauty passed the greater part of the day. Her temper was perfectly amiable and mild, yet it was easy to perceive, from the occasional ardour of her expressions, when recalling the past happy hours of her life, that her heart was capable, like that of many of her sex in the East, of an intense

and devoted attachment. Owing to the custom of the Orientals of excluding the women from the mosques, and from all external form of worship, they are often grossly ignorant of their own religion; and this lady was quite unacquainted with her Koran, its laws, punishments, or its glowing promises. The prospect of meeting her murdered husband in Paradise opened not to her; the Prophet having forbidden the foot of woman to enter the same bowers of bliss. Even the promise of a separate heaven for the fair was lost on her; for she opened one day a gold-illumined copy of the book of faith, read carelessly a few passages, then threw it down in disgust.

Scenes of violence and atrocity took place almost every day in Tripolizza, which stained the pure and glorious cause of Liberty; but the soldiers were not always under the control of their officers, who did not, in general, license these excesses. The wretched Turks, about five hundred of whom had been left alive, and who now went about the streets poor and friendless, were often put to death out of mere wantonness, and their bodies were left exposed in the street. It was enough to touch the hardest heart to see the condition of this people. A short time before, in Da-

mascus and Rhodes we had seen them haughty and arbitrary, splendidly dressed, and treading the earth as if it were only created for them. Here they were prostrate in the dust, trampled on, the noble and ignoble, by the lowest Greek; and when they walked through the streets, it was with a trembling step and fearful and suspicious look, as if they dreaded a dagger or pistol at every corner. As we stood one morning in the market-place, near a crowd of Mainotes and Greeks, three unhappy Turks rushed by, closely pursued by several of the latter with weapons in their hands: the liveliest terror was visible in the countenances of these unfortunate men, as they strove to outstrip their pursuers; but it was in vain, for in the next street they were overtaken and put to death.

But the desolation of a state like this fell with most force on the softer sex. A Turkish lady, who had lived in affluence, often came to the house of Nicolai, to solicit charity of the strangers. Her supplication was irresistible, for she always brought her two children with her, one in each hand, and, weeping bitterly, told of their desolate condition since their father was slain. This mother's lament was often present to our imagination afterwards.

As the plain of Mantinea was only a few hours' ride from the city, we set out on a fine afternoon to visit it. A young Greek merchant had engaged to accompany us, but he rode on before to find a place that might afford us some accommodation. The way was over the plain, which was totally destitute of interest, being little cultivated, and barren of trees. Turning to the left, we quitted this plain, and entered on another, narrower, and more varied, which led to that of Mantinea. The sun had set ere we arrived at it, and it became quite dark as we ascended the hills; the way was rugged and winding, and it was difficult to discern it. A light appeared not far off, and, guided by the sound of a stream falling over the rocks near it, we came to a poor cottage, where a Greek woman directed us to the house of the priest, situated higher up the mountain. The good pastor came out to receive us, and we found within our acquaintance the Greek, who assured us of being well lodged here. We spread our mattress on the floor; the lamp was suspended from the ceiling; and the women of the house, who now and then put their curious faces into the room, were ordered to prepare our supper. The good father was married, and had a household of several women, con-

sisting, no doubt, of his wife and daughter. The merchant showed himself a bad caterer; for, instead of a cheerful repast, a solitary dish only made its appearance, the nature of which it was difficult for some time to discover. It turned out, however, to be composed of eggs and cheese fried together, and, though novel, was very good; and some indifferent wine accompanied it. After the supper was finished, several Greeks came in from other cottages, and the conversation became animated. One of them undertook to sing for our amusement; it was a Moreot song, all about Georgis, one of their heroes, but not of the present day. The song and the sound too were very dismal, and we were obliged to listen to them for the best part of an hour. At last we all lay down on the floor, and soon enjoyed an oblivion of our cares.

The next morning, soon after sunrise, the scene from without, near the cottage, was beautiful in the extreme. The dwelling stood on a green bank in the highest part of the mountain, and looked down on the plain of Mantinea, directly beneath. At the foot of the opposite mountains were scattered some cottages, and the harvest was gathering in on the few cultivated spots around. Near the priest's habitation was a fine old tree, and we

took our breakfast beneath its shade, enjoying the magnificent view around and beneath. The luxuries of sight and sense were both gratified at the same time; for this early mountain-breakfast consisted of eggs, new milk, and excellent honey, with Mocha coffee, and cakes just baked on the earth.

We soon after rode down into the plain, with the pastor for our guide. It is small and inclosed by a double amphitheatre of mountains, the furthest chain rising higher than that in the front; and appears admirably fitted for a field of battle. On the right is the eminence where the Athenian infantry were posted, and this is the only elevation in the plain: the Theban line of battle would appear to have extended directly across the plain, beginning at the foot of the mountain, near to which the pastor pointed as being the spot where, according to tradition, Epaminondas fell. The site of Mantinea is distinctly to be traced, not very far from the field of battle; the remains of the walls, which are about two miles and a half in circumference, are about two feet in height all around, and eight or ten feet thick. In winter, these ruins, as well as great part of the plain, are covered with water, and appear like a vast marsh; but at present the soil

was perfectly dry, and covered with verdure. On the eminence is the ruin of a small edifice, which is possessed of little interest.

Except a few cottages on the face of one of the mountains, there was not a single habitation throughout the whole scene. Our reverend guide now took leave of us, and we rode slowly over the plain. It was mid-day, and excessively hot, and we wished for some welcome shade. At some distance, on the right, were several rude tents, of a peculiar kind, used by the peasants of the country, to screen them from the heat: they consist of four poles, fixed on the ground, with a canopy of leaves and branches for a roof. We took refuge beneath one of these, near which were two or three peasants, each of them armed: they brought us some milk and excellent fresh butter. The Greek merchant, who took better care of himself than of his friends, produced a couple of excellent fowls from his pocket, of the existence of which we had not previously the least idea. We were completely screened from the heat, and enjoyed an excellent view over the plain; and were induced to remain till the cool of the evening, when we had an agreeable ride back to Tripolizza.

The weather had been for a long time uni-

formly delightful: since we left Cyprus, the sky had seldom been clouded, and it had rained only once. The nights were so calm and mild, that we always slept under the open corridor in the garden. It was now July, the hottest month in the year, but except about mid-day, the heat was never very oppressive.

The chief food of the lower orders appeared to be vegetables; of fruit there was very little; and even in the houses of the senators the wine was execrable. The only meat we could procure was mutton, and the only luxury some excellent honey: the Greeks are very fond of blending the two together in their cookery; and a stew of mutton and honey, which we often had, was a very good dish. This town was never considered a place of luxury by the Turks. The women, it is true, were some of the finest in Greece, and one would imagine this circumstance to be all-sufficing without other attractions; though it must be confessed that the dearth of trees, gardens, and fountains, with the barren plain around, and the still more barren mountains in the distance, presented a different scene from the luxuriance of Nature encircling the Syrian towns and cities.

Being desirous of seeing the style of dancing

of the Greek women, of which we had heard so much, Nicolai engaged some of the best dancers in the place, and had a supper provided on the occasion, which is always the custom here. These dancers displayed a great deal of skill: their movements were slow, and forming a circle, they joined their hands, and moved in exact unison with their feet, to the sound of the guitar. This was played by a Turk, who was a master of his instrument. He had secreted himself at the capture of the town; and probably his skill on the guitar had some share in inspiring the mercy he afterwards experienced, as he often attended the convivial parties of the Greeks. He was accompanied by his daughter, who was an exquisite dancer; and one or two gentlemen, with an Englishman, completed the party.

The history of this gentleman's enterprize for the fallen glories of Greece is less tragical than H——'s. E—— had landed at Calamata from Malta, whence he brought one or two letters of introduction. He had brought one addressed to the Senate from an English gentleman, distinguished for his love of, and exertions for, the cause. Unable to speak any language save his own, his intercourse with

the Moreots was, of course, likely to be very circumscribed. Being rather ignorant of the nature of the country he had entered, on landing near Calamata he walked into the town, and left his trunk on the beach, under the care of some Greeks. While these worthies were keeping guard over it, five or six Mainotes came up, and presented their muskets at the Greeks, who took to flight. Poor E——'s trunk, containing his money, clothes, and books, was quickly ransacked by these fellows, who, not contented with the more convertible part of the contents, carried off "Lalla Rookh" and "Don Juan," which chanced to be part of them. It would be worth while to know the subsequent fate of these volumes, made companions of the Mainote's wanderings; an additional canto might certainly be made out of the adventures of the latter. On his arrival at Tripolizza, in company with a young Greek colonel, E—— applied to the Senate to recover his lost effects, who very civilly told him they could do nothing in the business. He had an excellent cavalry sword, and pistols, but as the Greeks had no horse, his prowess in this way was likely to be little called for. He was brave however, and longed, on his arrival, to be engaged in active service. But, when he

saw the inconveniencies and hardships to which he was sure to be exposed, and, above all, when he heard the unfortunate end of H——, whom he knew, his zeal considerably abated. He was lodged at the house of one of the senators, a quiet old man, who seemed much fonder of his pipe than of discussing the affairs of the war. Having studied medicine, the Englishman's skill was put in requisition by many of the sick people of Tripolizza. A detachment, under the command of the Greek colonel, his acquaintance, was ordered to march to Argos, and E——, and some other Europeans, were directed to join them. Among the latter were two Italians, who had arrived in the same vessel with him, from Malta. They were needy adventurers, scantily provided with clothing: each of them, however, took care to furnish himself surreptitiously with a coat. The rights of proprietorship did not seem to enter into their consideration. Like Falstaff, they were ready to "take any man's horses," and garments too. They all set out for Argos in the evening, and, marching all night, arrived there next morning. But they had not been there above two days, when the alarm was given that the cavalry of the enemy were drawing near. The cry was raised throughout

the place, "The Turks are coming." The inhabitants instantly took to flight, after setting fire to part of the town. Most of them took the way to Moulin, a small sea-port about two hours' distance. E—— giving up at once his hopes of glory, and abandoning Greece to its fate, joined the throng, and took flight on foot for the same place; where he had the good fortune to get on board a bark, and arrived in safety at Malta. Should this page meet his eye, it will revive the memory of his bloodless expedition, with the recital of which he has more than once amused an evening circle at home.

The Europeans who came to Greece at this time were very badly off. The Greek Government could not afford them any pay; and a ration of bread and meat, and sometimes a little wine, was the utmost they received. Many of them appeared, like Prospère and his companions, in want of clothing. To them it was a war of little emolument or glory; yet they bore their privations and hardships, particularly the Germans, with great patience and fortitude. There was a regiment of four hundred of these men, under the command of a Frenchman, who had the title of General Normein, and they fought bravely on several

occasions. But they gained as little by success as they lost by defeat. Indeed, the only order of people who appear to have been gainers by the Revolution, are the Greek peasantry: all the taxation and oppressions they were used to, are taken off their shoulders, and they enjoy the full produce of their labours, without any master or landlord to share with them. And even the war does not fall very heavily on them, as they serve only for a few months, and then return to their homes, to cultivate their lands. The harvest of this year was so uncommonly productive, that they said they could carry on the war for two years on the produce of this, without any further exertions in agriculture during that period.

The Greek merchants are, perhaps, the greatest sufferers by the war. Many of them with whom we met, deplored the loss of great part or the whole of their property; their houses, merchandizes, or ships, had all, more or less, suffered. Those who resided on the coasts of Asia Minor, Syria, or in some of the isles, had been obliged to quit their homes precipitately, and leave their effects to the mercy of the Turks. Others, whose property lay in Patras, Napoli, &c. found it now use-

less, as the Turks were in possession of these places: one merchant, who was the owner of several dwellings in Patras, complained he was half ruined, as they were now of no profit to him. Many a lucrative branch of commerce was, of course, now entirely closed to them. Some of these men were not patriotic enough to rejoice in the change of affairs: one of them, who had lost ninety thousand piastres, asked with energy, of what use was the war to him, as it had turned him out of a good dwelling and many luxuries, and compelled him to live on a bare competency?

Some of the generals, particularly Colocotroni, have, perhaps, taken care of themselves: report says, the latter has had his share of the spoil on most occasions. In Tripolizza, little was found, except arms, that could benefit the government. The private plunder was scattered amongst the soldiers, some of whom were comparatively enriched. Ladies' ornaments, rich dresses, and furniture, might be purchased soon after the capture at a very cheap rate: arms embossed with silver, were often in the hands of common soldiers. But the rich divans of the Turkish palaces had altogether disappeared; the walls and floors were entirely naked; the gardens were suffered to run wild, and the

most magnificent apartments became the scenes of riot of the soldiery.

The seraglio of Courschid Pacha was also captured. The Greeks had the prudence not to put to death, or offer any rude treatment to these ladies, knowing it would exasperate the Pacha to extremity; but they accepted his offer of a large sum for their ransom, and sent them safely away.

A little Turkish boy of ten years of age, had been saved from the fate of his family by some of the Greeks, and was now treated with kindness, and suffered to walk about the streets. Every effort had been used by his captors to induce this child to be baptized, and become a Christian; but he showed a firmness surprising for his age, always resolutely refusing to abandon the faith of his fathers, and, when menaced even with death if he did not consent, declaring he would rather die than become a Christian. But his captors, though they put him to the severest tests, were too humane to have recourse to the last expedient.

LETTER XXVII.

THE state of affairs now became very alarming: it was known for certain that Courschid Pacha and his army were rapidly advancing. Rumour had magnified this force extremely, but it was now understood to consist of at least thirty thousand men. The Turks seemed on this occasion to have entirely abandoned their indolent and dilatory way of carrying on a campaign, and were pouring down like a torrent. Courschid had pledged himself to the Sultan to subdue the Morea this campaign; and his fine army, the flower of which were a thousand cavalry, almost justified the boast. The Greeks were taken entirely unprepared, and had no force in the field to oppose the enemy: divisions among the senators and the chiefs had distracted their counsels.

The alarm at Tripolizza was excessive on the first intelligence of the rapid approach of

the Turks. The Government ordered all the shops to be closed: the people assembled in the streets, and formed into groups, all conversing on the terrible news with pale and panic-struck countenances. The next day, rumours of a contrary nature arrived: the shops were ordered to be opened again, and the hopes of the people revived. But, on the third morning, the intelligence was brought, that the Turkish cavalry had taken the isthmus of Corinth, which was left shamefully undefended; and that the main army was close behind. The consternation that instantly spread itself over the town was dreadful; but when, not long after, it was known that the Turkish cavalry were at Argos, you would have thought that Courschid was already at the gates of Tripolizza. It was now evening; Argos was only seven hours' distance from the town, and the cavalry of the enemy could easily arrive in the course of the night. The most unsparing and indiscriminate slaughter was sure to follow their arrival: for they had the massacre of their own countrymen at Tripolizza to revenge; and the Greeks could expect no mercy. The cries and wailings of women were heard in the streets, all wishing to fly: some weeping over their children, and im-

ploring succour; others preparing to take their way over the plain, and commit themselves to their fate. Nicolais sister's gave way to the madness of their terror, and he was too much frightened himself to encourage them.

Thus passed the night; the next morning came, and still the Turks remained at Argos. This gave breathing-time to the terrified inhabitants of Tripolizza. Many had fled in the night. The women and children were now enabled to depart on horseback. All sought the mountains, where they were assured of being safe from the enemy's cavalry. On the second day from the alarm, the town was two-thirds emptied. On walking about the streets, we were surprised to find them so deserted; scarcely a woman remained behind, and the senate had most of them joined in the flight.

The Turks who were in the town were very unfortunately situated at this moment, since the Greeks were resolved, had Courschid's cavalry advanced from Argos, to put all who remained of the Mussulman nation to the sword, as they were certain themselves of finding no mercy from the enemy.

The stern barriers of Turkish etiquette were entirely broken down in these unhappy times. At Constantinople or Damascus, it would have

been impossible for a traveller to have found admission into the interior of Turkish families; but in Tripolizza, the war had overthrown, in a good measure, the old *regime*.

A singular scene was presented in a dwelling to which we one day found our way. In one long and large apartment were crowded a great number of Turks of all ages, sexes, and conditions: ladies of rank were mingled with the lowest orders; their dress and hair in the utmost disorder, for many of them had been wounded, and there was no medical aid, no hand of kindness, to alleviate their condition; some lay stretched on the floor, others crowded together in a small space: they could not dare to stir out of their retreat, for fear of the people. It was an event so new to them to find that any one took an interest in their fate, that they poured out their feelings in the name of Alla and the Prophet with great sincerity. The resignation and patience with which they bore their misfortunes were admirable; no upbraidings against Providence, no fruitless repinings were heard; but it was the will of Heaven, they said, and they submitted to it.

Early in the morning we went to the house of Handivia: all those of her country were so unfortunately situated, that the arrival of their

own army would be the greatest calamity that could befall them. She was excessively agitated, and busied in preparing for instant flight to the mountains. What could be more friendless than the situation of this ill-fated young lady; the past was full of miserable recollections, and the future presented nothing to hope for: every relative and friend cut off, and in the midst of enemies, whom any casual exasperation might urge to inflict on her the same fate. Just before her departure, her friend, the young lady spoken of before, who had been the companion of the Aga's family in all their distresses, came to bid her farewell. It was a touching scene; the former, whose features were quite faded with sorrow, and who seemed to yield helplessly to its power, threw herself into Handivia's arms: they embraced each other passionately, and clasped their hands, and wept, and then mourned aloud at being compelled thus to part, without a hope of ever meeting again. But the danger was pressing, and Handivia hastened to depart, without a friend to aid or protect her in that perilous journey. Misfortune, however, had not yet done persecuting her: she had not advanced above two hours' distance, when

she met some Mainotes, who plundered most of her rich dresses and other effects, and then suffered her to proceed, without offering her or the two Greek women who attended her, the smallest personal injury; and they reached the retreat in the mountains in safety.

Had the Turkish cavalry at this time advanced to Tripolizza, they could not have met the slightest resistance. There was scarcely any force in the town, and the country between it and Argos, though mountainous, was quite undefended. It is difficult to account for the supineness of the enemy, which proved, however, extremely fortunate in the then disordered state of the country. The French surgeon called on me, with a large sabre at his side: he was resolved, he said, not to leave the town, but to stand his ground, and remain to the last with the people among whom he had come to spend his life. Prospère and his companions, from Navarino, had also found their way here a few days before: they had marched on foot, and were overcome with fatigue and the privations on the way. The first was very ill when he arrived, of a fever, from the heat and the long journey, but under the care of the surgeon he soon recovered. He

was resolved, however, like a true Frenchman, not to be cast down or despair, and, though the war had rather a discouraging aspect, yet he would play his part. He soon had an opportunity; for he was quickly after, with his companions, ordered to march out in company with a small Greek detachment, towards Argos.

All the distress, however, at this period, did not fall on the Turks, but some of the Greek families drank deeply of the bitter cup. They could expect little mercy from the enemy, and they knew, from the experience of the dreadful scenes of Scio, what would be the fate of their wives and daughters. In one of the most respectable families of the town, of the name of S——, a scene was presented on the first day after the alarm of the Turks' approach, that could have occurred perhaps only in Greece. On many occasions during this glorious struggle for their liberty, the Grecian women have displayed a fortitude and daring worthy of the brightest days of their history; but these qualities have sometimes had a degree of the barbarous and unfeeling mingled with them. This family consisted of a mother and three daughters. The two elder were married to Greek officers, who were at this time with the army; the youngest, Emeralda,

was a beautiful girl of eighteen years of age, superior in accomplishments to most of her countrywomen, for she had resided a short time in Russia, and understood French. Except some skill in the guitar and the dances of their country, the Greek girls have little to boast of, and are very insipid companions. The family of S. had been affluent, but the circumstances of the war had reduced them, in common with very many others, to a mere competency. The house in which they resided in the best street of the town, was a very good one, and well furnished in the Greek style. The eldest sister was a woman of commanding mind and unshaken resolution: she, in common with her family, bore a deadly hatred to the Turks, and the thought of their sacking the town and satiating their revenge was agony to her feelings. She took an extraordinary determination, and did not hesitate to express it in the strongest terms, which was, to put her young and engaging sister to death, on the Turks entering the town. A friend of the family called on me the same morning, and related the circumstance with expressions of sorrow and indignation, for he had just left the house. Struck at so strange a resolution, we hastened to intercede, and pre-

serve the Greek beauty from the fate that hung over her; but every entreaty was in vain. We then offered without delay to procure horses and quit the town, taking the road to the coast, and thus convey this helpless girl out of the reach of the enemy; or should we encounter them, the firman of the Sultan, which we carried, would prevent any violence from being offered. But the eldest sister was stern and inflexible. "I know what will be her fate," she said, pointing to Emeralda, who was weeping bitterly. "Were death all, she should never receive it from me: it matters less for me and my other sister, who are married, and are no longer young—death will be our portion; but, sooner than she, so young and beautiful, should be the prey of the Turks, I will plunge a dagger in her heart with my own hand." And she would have dared to do what she said; for her eye flashed with fury as she spoke, and she used the most impassioned gestures. The poor girl, by her sorrow, showed that the prospect of such a death was in no way welcome to her; but she had not power to escape it of her own accord, for in this country the elder female branches of a family often exercise a kind of arbitrary authority over the younger. She

stood bathed in tears, in another part of the room, and her long dark tresses fell dishevelled down her neck: she uttered no reproach or complaint, knowing it was useless to oppose the resolve of her elder sister. It was a fine scene for a painter; for her features were strictly Grecian, and her figure about the middle size, while that of her sister was large and unwieldy, but her countenance was haughty and resolute. Each renewed effort to move this woman's resolution, or induce her to consent to the flight of her sister, with every assurance of honourable and kind treatment, was in vain; no, she would not suffer her to go with those of another religion and country, be exposed to various vicissitudes, and perhaps some unhappy destiny in the end, unknown to her family. But, for the honour of the sex, this lady's hand was not imbrued in the blood of her beautiful sister. The Turkish cavalry, contrary to hope, did not approach the town: the best use was made of the time, and on the following day, the three daughters and their mother left the town on horseback, and fled to the mountains, where they were safe. The name of Bobolina,* the

* An account of this Grecian Amazon, and of the circumstances which led to her violent death, will be found in

eldest, for so she was called, has not been quite unknown during the Revolution. On more than one occasion, during the war, she has distinguished herself by her heroic efforts in the cause of her country; and had a few of the Greek commanders been gifted with her fierce and unyielding spirit, their oppressors would long ago have left their shores.

But the hopes of the people grew brighter when they heard that Colocotroni was approaching with a small force, as they put confidence in the bravery of this general. He drew near the town on a fine evening. We went out on the plain to see the march: it was not a very imposing spectacle. There were about nine hundred men, who marched in a rather disorderly manner. The chief was in the middle; he was a tall and stout man, with a fierce countenance; he seemed to be about the middle age, and had evidently passed through many and trying changes of fortune. His nephew was with him, and several other chiefs; a French officer, of some experience, always accompanies this general. The troops were well armed, and were, in general, good-looking men, but without any discipline. The forces of each village are accustomed to go to

Mr. Emerson's Journal of his residence among the Greeks.—See "A Picture of Greece in 1825," page 162-3.

war beneath their own banner; so that there were as many flags as colours in the rainbow: blue, green, white, and yellow, all floated above the heads of this redoubted army. A few poor ragged Europeans were mingled in the ranks. Firing their muskets, and saluting their acquaintance, they entered the town, and their arrival diffused amazing confidence.

The measures of Colocotroni were full of energy and decision, and well suited to the urgency of the moment. Feeling, however, that he now had the authority, he assembled the Senate next morning, and bullied them without mercy; telling them he knew they loved nothing so well as to pass their hours smoking and lounging, or in the company of their pretty Turkish captives; while the fatigues of the war fell on him and his officers: that they had better attend with vigour to the affairs of the country, and strive to rescue her out of her present dangerous condition. He summoned instantly all the forces and peasantry from different parts to assemble at Tripolizza, and march with him, without delay, against the Turks. Intelligence of the general's resolution to oppose the further advance of the Pacha, flew like lightning. In the course of the following day, a division of several hundred

men arrived. Colocotroni now issued an order commanding that every person in Tripolizza above twelve years of age, should join his forces, under pain of death. The soldiers were to be seen in the streets pursuing the boys to oblige them to join the ranks; some entered with good will, others ran away in affright. Nicolai and his brother shrugged their shoulders at the thought of fighting: the former's office in the police was an excuse, while the latter kept out of the way. On the second day, troop after troop arrived, marching in with infinite vivacity and willingness, and welcomed with loud shouts: among them was a division of Mainotes, very fine men, fresh from their native mountains. About three thousand troops entered in the course of this and the next day, under various banners. The most unbounded confidence now succeeded to the constant alarms which, for several days, had agitated the people: they felt they were now free from any sudden attack, and knew that their general, by posting himself, as was his intention, in the passes of the mountains, could prevent any force of the enemy from advancing from Argos. These troops passed the night in the town, but were ordered to leave it early on the following day, to join Colocotroni, who was already on the advance towards the enemy. They march-

ed out in the highest spirits, uttering exclamations of contempt for the Turks, and confidence of victory.

Many of the women and children began now to return to their habitations, and the streets soon wore a more cheerful appearance: those families who were of good condition, however, still kept in their retreat in the mountains, resolving to wait till they should see what turn affairs were likely to take. To any reasonable calculation, it did not seem very probable that the small force of Greeks could long resist the fine army under Courschid, if he continued to advance in the same bold and fearless style he had hitherto done: but from this moment the operations of the Turks appeared paralysed, and success entirely forsook them.

In the midst of the confusion occasioned by these events, minor miseries were, for a time, forgotten or overlooked. The unfortunate Aga, Ali Cochi, of whom mention has been made, was taken from the place of his retreat by some of the Mainotes. They found the noble Turk seated in his solitary chamber, and, after behaving to him with indignity, conveyed him to the house of one of the senators. It was understood that this was to be his last habitation; as some of the Greeks told me he would soon, most probably, be put to death privately; as

he was known to have been an inveterate enemy to them, and to have used the greatest exertions in the defence of the town. The image of that wounded Turk, imprisoned and suffering, commending his son to our care, and blessing his wife and children, whom he never hoped to see again, has often followed me since amidst scenes of a far different character.

In the same house where the Aga had been confined, but in another part of it, lived three young Turks, quite retired: they were orphans, and of different parents. They often inquired with deep interest how the affairs of the war went on, and if there was any prospect of their being suffered to quit the country; a thing impossible to be achieved alone, as they would be sure to meet some of the stragglers from the army, or bands on the way to join it, who would be disposed to show them little mercy. The last time we saw these three unfortunates, was on the morning after the first intelligence that the Turks were at hand, whose near approach, they knew, would only accelerate their own destruction. They stood together beneath the corridor of their house, and broke out, on our entrance, into loud and affecting lamentations; their looks were wild and agitated. Not knowing what to do, they had taken

the extraordinary resolution, which despair only could prompt, of flying from the town on foot: the same evening, they quitted the town precipitately, to travel over the plain to the mountains, but never, it was believed, arrived there; as it was said, next day, they had been met in the way by some straggling soldiers, and put to death.

In a secluded part of the town, to which a long and narrow lane conducted, stood the palace of a Turkish general, who had been killed in the storm. Being invited one day to visit it, we followed the guide for some time, through this confined passage, and soon came to the door of the mansion. It was very spacious, and had been splendidly furnished; the deserted apartments retained their rich gilding and ornaments, but the walls and floors were naked. We came at last to the harem;—the handsome divan had disappeared, as well as every trace of luxury. The apartment, which was large, was lighted by two rows of windows, which extended round three sides of the room. The upper row was of finely painted glass, and beneath each window were numerous sentences from the Koran, in large letters of gold, inculcating the finest precepts of morality. You then passed into a small and elegant saloon

that looked out on the garden. The only ornament of the room was a painting of Constantinople on one of the walls, several feet long, in which mosques, and groves, ships, and mountains, were mingled together in admirable confusion. The garden, into which the apartment looked, was very large, and had been an excellent one, but at present was quite a wild, ruinous and neglected, with its flowers and rich foliage giving their shade and odours in vain. A fine fountain was in the middle; but it gushed idly away, amidst the fruit-trees, that bent over it in the time of its owner's prosperity.

This mansion had been a luxurious residence; but the widow and her only child now dwelt in it alone,—to whom it was, indeed, as a desert. They were seated at the window, gazing on their desolate garden; not a footstep was heard in their numerous apartments, which had been all ravaged by the victor: they had chosen the most remote for their habitation. Their's was, indeed, a state of loneliness that pressed on the very soul: fearful of ever moving from the apartments into the open air; affrighted at every noise or sound of tumult that came from the distant streets; with the chambers of their former

luxury and pride for ever before their eyes, where their husband and father's blood had been lately shed. Wherever they passed—into the ruined harem, the garden, or to the fountain's side—every spot and every scene only aggravated their distresses: these were their beloved retreats but a few months before, where the faces of friends and the sweet voices of affection met them. But to the widow and her child, no friend was now left on earth, and their own home was become bitter to them.

We paid another visit to the plain and ruins of Mantinea. The latter, which consist almost entirely of the walls, are nearly circular, and are fortified, at intervals, with towers. There are seven or eight gates in these walls; but no ruins of a temple, theatre, or other public building, are to be found. The situation is rather confined for a city of any considerable size, the plain being small, and inclosed on almost every side by lofty mountains. A small sluggish stream flows at the entrance of the plain.

It was now time to think of leaving Tripolizza. The last accounts from Colocotroni, whose force had now increased to nine thousand men, were encouraging.

In the mean time, an opportunity had oc-

curred of rescuing the son and daughter of the Aga from their unfortunate situation, by conveying them to the nearest port, a journey of a day and half, and then procuring for them a passage to Constantinople, where they had many friends. The mother, who had resolved to remain, and share the fate of her husband, with her youngest children, from whom she could not part, was overjoyed at this: but when the horses to convey away her elder children were at the gate, and the way was open for their escape, the mother's feelings became too powerful, and she mourned and lamented over her daughter, as if she was doomed to be executed before her eyes. Her mind, enfeebled by continued misery, had not fortitude enough to bear the separation: indeed, this ill-fated family seemed to be destined never to know the slightest change of fortune. The finest feelings of the human heart were powerfully and passionately displayed by them; and their devoted and faithful attachment to each other, and to their friends, (for whose distresses they felt as much as for their own,) could not be surpassed.

Having procured a passport, we now resolved on pursuing our journey; and leaving Tripolizza, and its various scenes of sorrow and

misfortune behind us, bent our way, on a beautiful morning, over the plain to the north of the town.

The weather was calm and cloudless, as we wound our way between the mountains that encircle the plain of Tripolizza. As we looked back on it, it presented no longer the scene of alarm and distress which it had exhibited a few days before, covered with fugitives hurrying to the hills for shelter. It was now animated by various parties of Greek soldiers, each under their own banner, marching to fight for their country. These numerous detachments, who had left their occupations at home, and hastened from various parts of the Morea, at their general's summons, already augmented his army to nine thousand men. This force was now posted on the hills round the valley of Argos, in which the Turks had pitched their camp. The Ottoman general, Dramali, whose army consisted, in great part, of cavalry, had committed a great error in choosing so confined a position, which was incessantly harassed and surrounded by the Greek infantry; who, by keeping up a fire of musketry, often brought down numbers of the enemy, with little loss to themselves. The Mainotes showed a good deal of bravery in these attacks, in which they

were generally foremost. Stimulated as much by the love of plunder as by patriotism, they were at once the friends and the enemies of Greece.

Amidst the trouble and confusion at Argos on the approach of the Turks, the whole of the town was burnt, and the flying inhabitants, instead of being defended by the Mainotes, were plundered by them without mercy. The booty thus treacherously acquired, was carried by these men to their native mountains; and their wives, like true descendants of the ancient Spartans, came to meet and congratulate them,—urging their bandit-husbands to return again to the scene of action. These lawless people fared better in this war than the rest of the Greeks: perfectly secure in their fastnesses from the ravages of the invader, and undisturbed by intestine broils, they descended to the war, remained as long as they pleased, plundered friend and foe, and returned again to their mountain refuge.

Many Greek women, on their way to a place of security, found, too late, that the valuables they had saved from the Turks, had become the prey of the Mainotes. The unfortunate Handivia was an instance of this; whose rich dresses and few remaining ornaments, saved amidst the storm, could not escape the rapa-

city of these unprincipled allies. Her mountain abode was now in view. Lofty and distant from the scene of danger, yet almost overlooking the plain, it afforded a secure asylum: a long and narrow path led to it. It was a small Greek hamlet, situated on the craggy heights of the mountain, among which a few spots of verdure were intermingled. Some goats that browsed around, with bread, milk, and fowls, were the luxuries the place afforded. This retreat was rendered still more disagreeable by the number of Greek fugitives who had crowded to it, and who chiefly consisted of women and children, with some old men. But it was safe from the cavalry of the enemy, and that was all they sought: they could not hear from these solitudes the war-cry, the prelude to slaughter, that had often followed their steps. The cottages consisted, each of them, of a couple of apartments, with windows of wooden frame-work, through which, when the fire was kindled in the middle of the floor, the smoke found its way, as well as through the place of entrance. This was an unfit asylum for a woman brought up in the lap of luxury, and accustomed to the various indulgences of a Turkish habitation of the better order. It was a mountain village of the rudest kind, destitute of every comfort; the

rich Persian carpet of the harem was exchanged for the cold earth floor, and its coarse mat of reeds; and the bath, the surmeh for the eyelids, the elegant chibouque, and the rose-wood to burn in it—these enjoyments had no place here. Yet the Turkish beauty, vain even in the utmost misery, continued to disfigure her small and lovely hands with the red dye of the hennah, the only remains of her once splendid toilette. She inquired earnestly after the friends she had left behind in Tripolizza, and expressed the strongest interest in their fate. Her fine and colourless features had become yet more pale, and her look more languid and desponding. How could it be otherwise, after having endured so many sorrows, and being now left to suffer them alone? The few remaining friends of her country, who took the least sympathy in her fate, she had little chance of beholding again. Every attention was paid to her situation, that circumstances admitted of, by some Greeks, who guarded the few Turkish fugitives; but no bribe could prevail on them to allow her departure for her own country,—that, to her, beloved land of Turkey, where her friends lived in affluence. Her tears flowed fast when we parted from her to pursue our journey. Every exertion to procure her liberty had

been in vain. We speedily lost sight of that mountain retreat, but memory could not so soon banish the lot of the ill-fated Ottoman lady.

The path we were now pursuing afforded little beauty of scenery, being barren and rugged. In the evening, however, we entered a narrow and pleasant valley, where we encountered a band of Greek peasantry, marching in a very disorderly manner, with several flags, to join the army. They stopped and questioned us, and then passed on; but in the rear, and the last of the band, came, most despondingly, a Greek priest, whom these fellows had compelled to go with them, with the threat of cutting off his head if he refused. He bore a large sabre at his girdle, and complained bitterly of being compelled to go to war against his will.

We soon after ascended a hill, about half way up which was a small village, the only resting-place for the night within view. As the chief man of the place, however, was very inhospitable, and abused us as infidels, we made our couch beneath a large spreading tree. We awoke almost with the first light of day the next morning, and pursued our way over the mountains. In the course of a few hours, we met several detachments of

Greeks, coming from the scene of action; they had been severely handled by the Turks, and some of them were wounded.

Towards evening, we came to a deep and verdant valley, through which a small river ran. On the hills on each side were a few scattered cottages, and we found a civil reception at one of them; the master of which killed a kid for our supper.

The following day, we ascended some very high hills, covered with wood; and, after passing them, travelled through a fine country, halting at mid-day beside a spring, till evening induced us to seek shelter at a solitary cottage. The weather was so calm, and the sun set so brilliantly on the wild and finely-formed mountains around, and the plain at their feet, that we did not molest the peasant's dwelling, but passed the night on the bank beside it.

On the fourth day, we reached the sea-shore at a late hour. Lights were visible, however, in a detached building on the sea-shore, used by the Greeks as a wine-house, and which, with a few scattered cottages at a short distance, was called Claranza. It afforded us a rude accommodation, during two days we passed here, till a boat could be procured to convey us to the Island of Zante. We went on board in the evening,

and sailing with little wind all night, had the satisfaction to perceive the rocky hills of the island full in view the next morning. And here ensued one of the most disagreeable events of the whole journey. The lazaretto was nearly full, and we were obliged to take possession of a sorry apartment, for thirty days and nights. After so much excitement, scenes ever changing, and an independent will, it was dreadful to be immured in a wretched apartment, destitute of all comfort or accommodation: no amusement but to gaze through the open window for hours on very lovely scenery; a hill with a white cottage, and its garden on the summit, a few hundred yards distant; a flight of steps conducted to the fountain beneath; and we could see the Greeks every day, seated in the corridor, happily enjoying the cool air, while we were suffering some of the feelings of Tantalus; and pining for the fresh atmosphere, and sweet scenes of nature. Many of the people shut up in the court below, were ill of the fever, and some had died of it. My poor servant caught it also, and removed his mattrass from the single chamber that was allowed us into the comfortless passage without, lest his presence should give me the infection: and here, after braving

so many dangers and hardships, he had nearly perished.

Indeed, the lazaretto at Zante is one of the most infamous places an unfortunate traveller can ever be imprisoned in; and the quarantine laws are so severe, that, even in case of dangerous illness, they will not abridge the period of confinement a single hour. Col. G.'s servant died in this abode a few months before of the fever; his master had nearly shared the same fate, and with difficulty recovered, after his release from quarantine. The month expired at last, and we breathed the pure air again; and in the way to the town, walked beneath the trees and on the sea-shore, with heartfelt joy, and felt like captives who had burst their chain.

After residing a fortnight in Zante, I took passage on board a large vessel about to sail for England, and parted from my faithful and excellent servant, who returned to Constantinople. A voyage of seven weeks, with the usual vicissitudes of wind and weather, brought us to our native shore.

APPENDIX.

VISIT TO PALMYRA.

COMMUNICATED BY A FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR.

We had often earnestly wished to visit Palmyra; and the difficulties which at first stood in the way being now in a good measure removed, we resolved to undertake the journey. We made enquiry for an Arab scheik, both as a conductor and guardian; for these scheiks, who are connected perhaps with one or two more tribes besides their own, assure you of receiving no molestation on the journey: but they are apt to promise more than the event fulfils. This Arab demanded a thousand piastres for conducting us, and talked a good deal of the probable dangers of the way, and the importance his guidance would be to us. There had been lately some disputes between the Pacha of Damascus and one or two of the Arab-tribes of the desert, several of whose chiefs he had severely punished; and a traveller might chance to fall in with some of their followers, who would not, perhaps, give him the best reception.

About an hour before sun-rise we left Damascus, and proceeded over the plain in the direction of the mountain Ashloon. The path was delightful, as it led over the streams,

and through the forest of gardens which extend for many miles round the city. The numerous minarets of the latter now glittered in the rising sun, particularly those of the grand mosque, which are conspicuous from almost every point of view. No where in the East is the stranger so forcibly reminded of European scenery as around Damascus. The constant flow of waters through the gardens and woods, and the fresh and living green in which they are clothed, are peculiar features in so hot a climate.

In the course of a few hours we quitted the circuit of the groves and numerous villages, and entered on the wide and open plain. Our company consisted of two Bedouins to take care of six camels, and the baggage, ourselves, one servant, three horses, and the guide. We travelled no faster than the usual caravan pace, about three or four miles an hour. Turning in a short time to the left, we lost sight of the city and its delicious plain, and beheld the desert opening before us.

The prophets of Israel describe the desert as a dread and fearful residence in all their allusions to it; and in their predictions of future judgements on their countrymen, threaten them with that "howling wilderness, that waste and weary land, not inhabited," as one of the heaviest calamities. The traditions of the forty years' sojourn there was, probably, one cause of this. But the Prophet of Mecca has forborne such descriptions, knowing, perhaps, Arab as he was, that the wilds had their charms, and that his people loved them.

The soil over which we travelled was barren; here and there a cottage was seen. The verdure had not yet wholly left us, but continued to intersect the way, in small patches of olive and other trees.

The sun, as it drew towards mid-day, was very powerful, and we were obliged to have recourse to umbrellas as a shelter from the heat. There was no place that offered any tolerable accommodation till we should arrive at Carieteen; at the end of two days; but we were better provided with necessaries than on some of our former journeys. The path, too, was entirely different. In the Arabian deserts it was always of soft or hard sand, where a camel only could travel; here it was a firm road, covered sometimes with a coarse verdure, on which our horses travelled perfectly well. Achmed, the guide, was a spirited and shrewd fellow, very willing to converse, especially about the consequence of his tribe, and its great possessions. Greedy of money as the Arabs always are, it was evident that the prospect of the thousand piastres promised him was very agreeable; and although these people are very hospitable when their generosity is appealed to, it is always much easier to drive a bargain with a Turk than an Arab, who will grasp at the last para.

Soon after mid-day we alighted to rest beneath a small group of trees, that afforded a scanty shade. We had some cold provisions from the city; and, with the aid of some very excellent and strong white wine of Lebanon, presented by the fathers of the Spanish convent, made a tolerable dinner. The scene was wild, and spread to a great extent around us; the beautiful mountain of Ashloon intercepting the view to the left.

In about two hours we set out again, and after travelling till nearly dark, we halted and pitched our tent by a spring of water. The night proved extremely cold. In spite of the tent and our garments, we felt quite chilled with the keenness of the air, and found a good fire and a cup of coffee very grateful early the next morning, before our depar-

ture. This day we passed two or three villages, and had not advanced far when we beheld the plain before us covered with an immense multitude of Arabs, with their flocks and camels. They had come from plains far distant—from the extensive tracts which extend towards Babylon and Bagdad, he pastures being either scanty or else partially exhausted his season. They had journeyed hither, with all their flocks and herds, for the sake of the superior pasturage the Syrian plains afford. Their tents were spread over an immense space of ground before us; those of the scheiks being distinguished by their superior size. Groups of camels were standing in some parts, and groups of their masters beside them; and herds of cattle, goats, and horses, were dispersed over all the plain, mingled with parties of Arabs, who watched and attended them.

We could not avoid passing through the midst of this large encampment, and its numerous population. Some of the Arabs were very civil, and did not offer the least molestation or insult; others looked suspicious and angry, as if they would like well to plunder us. They invited us more than once to stop and take some refreshment; but as in that case we should have been soon surrounded by curious and observing groups, we declined the invitation, and passed on. It was some time before we disengaged ourselves from the numerous scattered detachments of this singular people, who seemed to live in perfect amity with each other, and to respect inviolably individual property, however exposed and intermingled.

Their dress was the same as that of the Arabs we had seen in Damascus; and their persons were middle-sized, often tall, but spare, and well-proportioned. Their flocks were numerous enough to afford them the substan-

tial luxuries of the table; and many of their tents appeared well furnished in the Eastern style.

We travelled on without halting, and with little variety in the way, till we arrived at Carieteen, a large village. The scheik, our guide, ordered a small sheep to be killed, and dressed for our supper. We were accommodated in one of the houses of the village for the night; and, a large fire being kindled on the floor, we seated ourselves sociably around it, with our conductor and the host of the mansion. A few of the inhabitants of the village made their appearance after the repast. We had still a couple of bottles of the strong convent-wine left, and the scheik and the host seemed to gaze on the forbidden draught with desiring eyes, yet dared not then, at least before witnesses, break the Prophet's command, though it did not appear from their manner to have been always a stranger to their lips. No men drink it with more heartfelt, yet outwardly subdued feeling, than very many of the faithful; who agree, no doubt, in the opinion of Wortley Montague, after he had embraced their faith, that the Turkish life wanted only one thing to make it perfectly happy—the permission to drink good wine.

Our resting-place this night, was much more comfortable than on the preceding, as we were fenced from the keen air. We left Carieteen the next morning, and advanced into a barren and sandy region, with neither tree nor shade, and not a salutary spring to afford relief. We were obliged to provide ourselves with a plentiful stock of water on leaving the village. The weather was very sultry, and the scene afforded nothing interesting to amuse the attention. No deep and secluded glens, the towering sides of which shut out the piercing sunbeams; no magnificent mountains, or hallowed regions, as the path to Mount Sinai perpetually dis-

played; but a waste and level plain, lined on each side, at the distance of many miles, by barren, low, and miserable hills.

We were obliged to have frequent recourse to our water-skins; for the thirst occasioned by the heat was extreme. The two Bedouins, fatigued with walking on the hot sand, at times mounted the camels. My companion bore the journey with uncommon cheerfulness and gaiety; for he had long had a passionate desire to see Palmyra, the only great ruin in the world, he said, that he had not visited. With joy we beheld the sun declining in the west, and felt the sultry heat succeeded by the cool breeze of the evening. In two or three hours we halted in the middle of the plain, being too fatigued to travel any farther. The fire soon blazed on the sand, and the cup of coffee and the pipe were quickly prepared. It is not on the rich carpet or in the splendid kiosque that these simple luxuries are most exquisitely enjoyed. Who that has ever tasted them after a day of burning heat and wasting fatigue, seated on the desert sand, but will say, they were sweeter to him there than when presented by the hand of beauty, or in the palaces of kings?

It soon became dark, as far as darkness can be in this climate; for the star-light was uncommonly fine. The tent was pitched, yet we continued seated round our cheerful fire; for the air already began to be very cool. The night on the desert, especially so calm and hushed a one as this, is peculiarly solemn and impressive: no sound to break on the stillness! no falling of waters or murmuring of groves, or voice of living thing!

The Bedouins, after their frugal supper, had wrapped themselves in their cloaks, and sought repose on the sand, beside their camels. We were obliged ere long to quit the

open air for a more agreeable abode, and take refuge in the tent. The climate of this country is much more severe during the night than in the deserts of Paran and Sinai; and the vicissitude from the sultry heats of day to the piercing colds is too strong for any constitution save that of an Arab; and verifies the words of the patriarch Jacob to his father-in-law, who dwelt in this very land—"that in the day the drought consumed him, and the frost by night;" and this is the case, more or less, through all parts of the year.

On the following morning we hastened our departure; for this was said to be the most dangerous part of the road, and there was no water to be had till our arrival at the ruins. The aspect of the country was the same as on the preceding day, the range of naked hills bounding the plain on each side. Not a single passenger appeared to enliven the scene, which was rather stupid and monotonous; and we halted again at night in the plain, with no small pleasure; for the tiresome pace of three miles an hour is inexpressibly annoying.

The next day we quitted our encampment in higher spirits, knowing that a few hours would bring us in view of the celebrated ruin we had so long ardently desired to see. The plain became much narrower as we advanced, and the hills on each side drew close together, and we entered a small valley; on arriving at the end of which, a plain in front all at once unfolded itself; and we had a distinct and full view of the glorious ruins with which it is covered. Like the first view of Damascus, this spectacle struck us the more as it burst suddenly on the sight after dreariness and disgust. On advancing a little farther, some of the Palmyrene Arabs came to meet us; and, after a civil salutation, conducted us to the habitation of the great scheik. This man,

with his followers, had made themselves habitations in a part of the great temple or palace; and they were much better lodged than in their own rude tents or ruder cottages. The scheik ordered coffee and a pipe, and gave us an abode of the same kind as his own, in a portion of the ruins. These wild and lawless fellows, herding amidst the most magnificent ruins in the world, and looking on themselves as the guardians of them, present, with their picturesque dress and arms, a fine and forcible contrast to the scene around, entirely in keeping.

As soon as our effects were deposited in our new habitation, and we had got rid of the Arabs for the time, we began to explore and walk about these immense remains. This is, indeed, a work of some time, on account of the great extent of ground they cover, and the various fine detached portions, unconnected now with any building, which every where meet the view:—a few pillars, standing in loneliness, the last of some gorgeous structure that is heaped in masses at their feet—a noble gateway, with the wreck of its rich ornaments, opening the way to ruin only and destruction —with tenantless tombs crowding on each other,—are the characteristics of this splendid solitude.

In this respect they have more resemblance to the ruins of Thebes in Upper Egypt, than any other; but surpass them greatly in regularity and beauty, though not in greatness; as the Corinthian and Ionic capitals of these long colonnades are more agreeable to the eye than the gigantic and unadorned columns of Carnac:—the grey marble of which they are composed adds to their elegance; though this, by exposure to the weather, is often covered with a reddish hue.

The first evening we passed here was a very delightful one, and the setting of the sun on the ruins of the great temple

was a noble and almost a melancholy scene. Being destitute of provision, we purchased a goat of the Arabs, who keep a herd of them here; and our evening repast was served up in our new abode—our cottage amidst the wrecks of palaces.

The next day we continued to view the ruins with unabated interest. It is difficult to estimate the entire space they cover; but the circumference may be about three miles,—rather more than that of the modern city of Jerusalem. The whole of this area may be said to be covered with numerous rows of columns, courts, arches, scattered pillars, and innumerable fragments of marble which strew the ground. Of this the great temple occupies the largest space; the columns, however, which compose it, are by no means lofty, being between thirty and forty feet in height; and they are slender in comparison with other Oriental ruins, the circumference not exceeding eight feet. These columns are in part fluted, and in part plain. The capitals of the temple are all Corinthian; but the beauty of these is almost entirely defaced by time and the mutilating hands of the Arabs;—the foliage and ornaments of the capitals are often entirely stripped and destroyed. A few of the columns, of the Ionic order, have their capitals better preserved. The effect of the superb colonnades in the great portico, is considerably injured by a projection from the shaft of the pillars, at little more than a third of their height, on which statues, perhaps, formerly stood. The finest view of the temple is from without the arch, where its long flights of columns are seen in beautiful perspective, mingled with porticoes and sepulchres. It would make the finest panorama in the world.

The decorations of the archway, which, by the portion that remains, appear to have been very minute and rich, are greatly defaced. Although the diameter of the pillars

is in general from two to three feet, the height of some of them amounts to forty feet; and a small row approaches near fifty, and many others do not exceed twenty-six feet. None of them, in beauty, size, or preservation, equal the noble columns which compose the portico of the temple of Balbec, which we afterwards beheld. The entablatures, and part of their ornaments, still remain on many of the flights of pillars; but among the innumerable fragments of every kind scattered over the ground, no fragments of statues are discoverable, and of the great number that formerly stood in the temple not a trace remains.

If the site of these remains is the same as that formerly occupied by the city built by Solomon, called Tadmor in the wilderness, which is tacitly believed, it is extraordinary how that monarch could have founded a city in so remote a situation—the only very distant one he is ever said to have erected. The city of Damascus must have been in his possession at the time, or he could not have built a city five or six days' journey beyond it;—and only a few years afterwards it is said that "Rezon was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon; and he dwelt in Damascus, and reigned over Syria."[111] It was, perhaps, some other spot, and nearer to Judea, that contained the city called "Tadmor in the wilderness." The Bedouins, however, universally call it Thedmor; and the tribe that resides here confidently believe that this was the city founded by Solomon the great king.

The hills round the ruins were probably covered in former times with palm-trees, as those around the capital of Palestine, but at present not one is to be seen; some olive-trees, growing amidst the fallen fragments, have a very romantic appearance, and afford a relief to the scene. The sepulchral monuments scattered about, are very numerous; some of

these are in ruins, others, more entire, are of considerable size and altitude, consisting of several stories and chambers, and displaying a grandeur of architecture, that brought to mind the tombs of ancient Thebes. Formerly a great number of mummies were found here; but the Arabs, as in Egypt, destroyed them for the purpose of getting at the composition with which they were embalmed. Fragments of mummies, and pieces of the cloth used in embalming, may now be discovered in these sepulchres; but nothing to repay the curious search: though in a few are evidently places where funeral urns have been deposited; and some sarcophagi yet remain, but empty. A late traveller has said, he discovered a hand, entire and well preserved, in one of these deserted chambers of the dead. They extend to some distance without the walls, even to the small valley by which we entered the plain, and prove the passion these people had for magnificent mausoleums. A few are built in the form of a tower, and have actually been employed by the Turks for that purpose; others are adorned with a portico; and the tombs are placed within in front of this, or in the sides; some, more simple, are entered by a small door, with a half column on each side, and a few steps in front. They are all built of marble, and are paved with the same material, and have had the same fate as those of the kings of Thebes, cut into the bowels of the mountain, or of Judea, hewn out of the precipitous rocks; remaining almost entire, while the ashes they contained have long been scattered to the winds.

The hill on which the castle stands commands a complete view of the city and the plain beneath. The ancient city in its glory, with its woods and streams, must have resembled an island embosomed in the ocean; for on every side a vast extent of desert opens; the same, no doubt, as it existed

then, in which you find no water, no shade or verdure, till you arrive in the plain of Palmyra, where you find plenty of water issuing from the very rocks. The castle is of the rudest style of architecture, of a date very subsequent to the buildings beneath, and is probably a work of the Saracens. The adjoining hills are crowned with buildings of a more ancient and venerable aspect, being the monuments of the Palmyrenes, who made the highest summits, as well as the valleys, abodes of their dead.

A few miles distant from the city is what is called the Valley of Salt; said to be the place where "David gat him a name by smiting the Syrians in the Valley of Salt." This circumstance shows how little the features of the surrounding country are altered since his time; for Damascus, besides other places, procures salt at present from this spot. The ground here has a very barren appearance, is impregnated with salt to some depth below the surface, but it is chiefly after showers of rain that the Arabs collect it, as in common salt-pits: a quantity of salt being found lodged on the surface after the moisture has evaporated.

One of the most singular objects in the plain is the sulphureous water, which is found in several places. At the base of a rocky mountain is the finest of these springs, which gushes out into a clear pool, and runs to some distance over the plain, where it is lost in the sand. The water is very warm, and is said to be useful in some complaints, the Arabs having a good opinion of its virtues. There are one or two more springs of the same water, but not so large in quantity as the first. At the foot of a high rock near the Red Sea, are four or five springs of a perfectly similar description, but hotter, and known only to the Arabs, with whom we had visited them, who drink of them whenever

they pass the spot, for their medicinal virtues. They gush out of the rock on the sand, and, having formed one or two pools, flow by a small channel into the sea.

In the evening we returned again to our Arab habitation, which, though not very spacious, was much cleaner than one of their tents. Our supper consisted of the same delicacy as the preceding day, goat's-flesh being the only food to be procured. As the evening was a beautiful one, we chose to take our meal in the open air. We had the foresight to bring a small quantity of brandy from Damascus, which with water was a very wholesome substitute for the wines of Lebanon. The Bedouins, who gathered round us, did not decline to partake very cordially of the brandy, which is a liquor not forbidden; strange that the Prophet should have indulged them in ardent spirits, and denied them juice of the grape!

The tribe settled here, under the great scheik, was not a very numerous one. He was a middle-aged man, not over civil in his manners, and proud of his dignity, particularly of the privilege he possessed of conducting the Pacha of Damascus to Mecca, when he went on his pilgrimage. This schiek was an imposing and rapacious man, and grasped at all he could get from the Giaours, as we soon had occasion to experience.

The Palmyrene women deserve the praise given to their beauty throughout the East; they are the finest-looking women of all the Arab tribes of Syria; their complexion is not very dark, and many of them have the fine and florid colour of more northern climates. Their manners are not so rigid as those of some of the tribes, who would not pass the tent of a Frank without scrupulously concealing their features, even in the heart of the Desert. The Palmyrene

women possess a cheerful and lively disposition; and though the veil is always worn, it does not very strictly perform its office. They are well and rather slightly made, as the life in the desert is always a foe to *embonpoint*; but their arms and hands are beautifully formed, and their features regular. Like other orientals of their sex, they dye the tips of the fingers and the palms of the hands red, and wear gold rings in their ears; and the jet-black dye of the hennah for the eye-lashes is never forgotten; they imagine, and perhaps with truth, that its blackness gives the eye an additional languor and interest.

Unlike most other Bedouins, these people never change their habitation, but remain there from year to year perfectly contented; and not without reason, as the climate is one of the healthiest in the world, and they have houses ready prepared of a better order than they are usually accustomed to. But they are not a rich tribe, having few flocks or herds, from the deficiency of pasture. The number of travellers who have visited them has been but few, and they have seldom been so well paid as by the "Great Lady"* some years since, whose arrival was a kind of epoch in their existence. The tax these fellows demand for the privilege of visiting the ruins is an enormous sum, but they have the power in their hands to compel payment: the fault is not wholly theirs; but it is a pity that subsequent travellers are obliged to pay for the extravagance of their predecessors.

On the last day of our residence at Palmyra we roamed again amidst the courts and porticoes of the Temple of the Sun, the magnificence of which, however defaced and mutilated, is without a rival; but it is the general effect of the spectacle, more than the beauty of any particular part, that

* Lady H. Stanhope.

compels admiration. The weather had been very favourable during our stay, and we resolved to depart; but it was more easy to resolve than to execute.

Every thing being ready in the morning, and the baggage placed on the camels, we bade adieu to our host the schiek, who looked very sullen, and began to demand more than we had yet given him, mingling a little abuse in what he said. Some of his people followed his example; and to avoid an unpleasant altercation, we were obliged to part with a portion of our effects to satisfy their cupidity. We then left with pleasure their inhospitable region, and rode slowly in the direction by which we had first entered the plain. Whoever visits Palmyra, will find the delight he feels at beholding it most materially diminished by the disagreeable circumstances to which he is liable. If he is fortunate enough to avoid the dangers of the way, which are sometimes great, the insolence and rapacity of the Arabs will annoy him beyond measure.

Passing through the valley, we again entered the wide plain, bordered by hills; and no particular event marked our journey till we arrived at Carieteen. After resting here for the night, we pursued our way the following day, and in the evening entered the delicious plain of Damascus; the gardens, rivers, and palaces of which had a look of enchantment, after the weary progress through the Desert.

THE END.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY, DORSET STREET.

00088358

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 03 December, 2015